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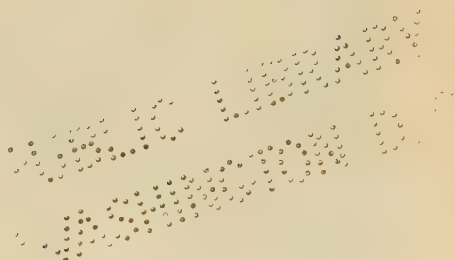






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MARION MILLS MILLER, Litt.D.  
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Philosophy,  
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## INTRODUCTION

### ROMAN PHILOSOPHY



As we have seen, in the Introduction to Epictetus (volume four of *THE GREEK CLASSICS*), in the Introduction to Lucretius (volume four of *THE LATIN CLASSICS*), and in the Introduction to Cicero (volume six of *THE LATIN CLASSICS*), Roman philosophy in all its phases was

a mere expansion (hardly development even) of the various schools of moral, physical and metaphysical thought among the Greeks. The Romans were singularly lacking in original intellectual speculation and investigation. The first impulse to philosophical thought came to them as late as B.C. 155, when an Athenian philosophical embassy, consisting of the Academic Carneades, the Stoic Diogenes, and the Peripatetic Critolaüs, came to Rome at the invitation of SCIPIO AFRICANUS MINOR, who desired that his people, while retaining the simple virtues of the old Romans, represented by Cato, should temper and refine these by the high culture of Greek civilization. The embassy was highly successful, planting seeds of the various philosophical systems represented, which took root at once and grew even more vigorously than the parent stocks.

In further pursuit of this plan, Scipio, one year after the departure of Carneades and his fellows, encouraged PANÆTIUS, a brilliant young Rhodian, just graduated from the Stoic school at Athens, to come to Rome, and aided him to gain a hearing among the Roman nobles. From these Panætius made many adherents by minimizing the subtleties and casuistries of the other Stoic philosophers, softening the severe practices which Stoicism had acquired from Cynicism, and presenting the philosophy in a practical form, consonant with literary culture and refined living. After Scipio's death (129 B.C.) Panætius returned to Athens, where he died at the head of the Stoic school (111 B.C.), the acknowledged leader of

that philosophy. Only a few fragments of his works remain. His Treatise on Duty formed the foundation of Cicero's Offices.

CICERO and VARRO took up the educational propaganda of Scipio, and by a number of works sought to popularize Greek philosophy among the Romans. Their spirit was broadly eclectic, with a bias in favor of the Academic (Platonic) school. This Eclectic Platonism was later taken up by APULEIUS, the author of *The Golden Ass*, an account of whom appears in volume eight of *THE LATIN CLASSICS*.

During the time of Cicero the Pythagorean philosophy, which long had had its chief seat among the Greeks of southern Italy, or Magna Græcia, was represented at Rome by P. NIGIDIUS FIGULUS, who was accounted, next to Varro, the most learned of the Romans. He was regarded as a profound mathematician and natural philosopher, and especially looked upon with awe as an astrologer, having predicted the future greatness of Octavius (later Augustus) on hearing of his birth. He was active with Cicero in suppressing Catiline's conspiracy, and took Pompey's part in the Civil War, being banished in consequence by Cæsar upon the latter's triumph. He died B.C. 44 in exile. The fragments which remain of his many works on mathematical, physical, grammatical, and occult subjects, uphold his reputation for learning.

It was Epicureanism, however, as taught by LUCRETIUS, and Stoicism, as represented by SENECA (see volume one of *THE LATIN CLASSICS*), CORNUTUS, and the emperor Marcus Aurelius, which became the most popular philosophies among the Romans, virtually dividing the nation into two great classes, ethical theists and æsthetic materialists.

A few words about Cornutus, who has not been discussed elsewhere, will be in place here. L. ANNÆUS CORNUTUS (whose name indicates a connection with the Senecas, possibly as a freedman), was born at Leptis in Africa, and lived at Rome under the reign of Nero, when he achieved great fame as a teacher of rhetoric and philosophy. He was the preceptor of Lucan, the poet, and Persius, the satirist (see Persius in volume three, *THE LATIN CLASSICS*). Persius, dying before his master, left him his library, and considerable money.

Of these bequests Cornutus accepted only the books, giving the money to Persius's sisters. In 68 A.D. Nero banished Cornutus for his freedom of speech in criticising the emperor's poem on Rome for its length, and, on the imperial egotist citing the length of Chrysippus's work as a precedent, in frankly replying, "His writings were useful to mankind."

Of the many works of Cornutus only one has survived. It is entitled, *Concerning the Nature of the Gods*; or, *Concerning Allegories*, and its purpose is to explain the Greek mythology on allegorical and physical principles.

MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS, the emperor, is fully discussed in the following introduction. It is only pertinent to state here the reason for including his meditations among THE LATIN CLASSICS rather than among THE GREEK CLASSICS, since this work, like Arrian's *Encheiridion* of Epictetus, was written in Greek. The fact that the author was a Roman of Romans, and connected so intricately by his exalted position with Roman history and literature, would cause him to be sought for by all but linguistic scholars among the Latin authors, and therefore, for practical considerations, he has been so included. The same reason applies to the inclusion in this volume of Julian the Emperor, whose theosophical work, *On the Sovereign Sun*, was written in Greek, and so linguistically as well as philosophically might properly have been included in volume four of THE GREEK CLASSICS, following the similar theosophical treatise of Plotinus, *On the Immortality of the Soul*.

Since no introduction is given in connection with the work of Julian, a sketch of his life will be here pertinent.

FLAVIUS CLAUDIUS JULIANUS was born at Constantinople in A.D. 331. He was the youngest son of Julius Constantius, the half-brother of Constantine the Great, on whose death there was a general massacre of the younger line of the Flavian family, to which Julian belonged, his father being among the slain. Julian was spared because of his extreme youth, and was reared under close and confining surveillance, which, together with remembrance of the murder of his father and brothers, caused him to hate Christianity, the faith professed by the perpetrators of these wrongs. Therefore, though Chris-

tian born, he readily accepted the philosophical heathenism of Neoplatonism, taught by his master Maximus. Grown to manhood, he pursued his general studies at Athens, and, since this was the center of the Neo-Platonic philosophy, he undoubtedly seized the opportunity to delve still more deeply into its mystical teachings. In 355 A.D. he was summoned to Milan to assume the rank of Cæsar, though under the imperial rule of Constantius at Constantinople, to whom his allegiance was thought to be secured by his marriage, at the time, with the emperor's sister Helena.

Julian was successful in his wars against the Franks and Alemanni, and this, combined with his notable virtues as a man as well as a ruler, made him the idol of his army. Therefore, when Constantius, alarmed by Julian's popularity, ordered away his best troops, all the soldiers revolted and proclaimed him emperor (April 360 A.D.). With 3000 picked troops he set out for Constantinople by way of the Danube. On the way he heard of the death of Constantius, and thereupon (November 3, 361 A.D.), proclaimed himself both emperor and pagan, sacrificing to the Roman gods, and ordering those persons who had torn down the pagan temples to rebuild them. He also confiscated the revenues of the Christian churches. These acts caused a recrudescence of paganism in the provinces, which led to great disorders, many Christians being tortured and put to death. Julian showed his sympathy with the pagans by his laxity in quelling these abuses, and by himself forbidding Christians to hold any office, civil or military, and by subjecting them to other disabilities and indignities.

In July, 362 A.D., Julian went to war with the Persians, establishing at Antioch his base of campaign. The people of this city, who, prone to satire, had fastened in jest upon the followers of Jesus the name of Christians, now turned their wit against the great enemy of the sect, making sport in verse and caricature of his long nails, and shaggy, lousy beard (for he was a true philosopher in that he took no care of his person). In reply he wrote a satire against them called *Misopogon*, "The Beard-hater," and, taking a lesson out of the



Fables of their countryman Æsop, punished them by giving them a King Stork in the shape of a rapacious governor.

While at Antioch Julian attempted to confute the Christians, by bringing the Jews from all parts of the Roman empire back to Jerusalem, and so confuting the Christians, who held that God had rejected those who were once his chosen people. The attempt was a failure, being frustrated by miracle, according to accounts of pagan and Jewish, as well as Christian authors. While the rebuilding of the ancient city to receive the exiles, was in process, so ran the common report, "fearful globes of fire, bursting forth repeatedly from the earth close to the foundations, scorched the workmen, and rendered the place, after frequent trials on their part, quite inaccessible."

In the ensuing campaign with the Persians, the emperor was mortally wounded (June 26, 363 A.D.), in the manner of Jesus, receiving a spear-thrust in the side. Theodoretus, a Christian writer, relates that, as Julian, falling from his horse, saw the blood spurting from the wound, he exclaimed: "Thou hast conquered, Galilæan; yet still do I renounce thee!"

Julian also wrote against the Christians, but these writings are lost. The works that are extant are, besides the *Misopogon* already mentioned, seventeen Epistles, nine Orations, and a satirical sketch called The Cæsars, or The Symposium, in which Romulus, deified, gives a banquet at which are seated, at separate tables, the gods and the Cæsars, the latter of whom are commented upon, *seriatim*, by Silenus, the ribald companion of Bacchus.

The work of Julian which appears in the present volume is one of the Epistles. It is addressed to SALLUSTIUS, or SALUSTIUS, a friend of the emperor who was the pretorian prefect. While a heathen, Sallust did much to restrain Julian from persecuting the Christians. He was a Neo-Platonist, like the emperor, and was probably the author of a theosophical treatise still extant entitled Upon the Gods and the Universe.





THE  
MEDITATIONS  
OR, DISCOURSES WITH HIMSELF OF  
THE EMPEROR  
MARCUS AURELIUS  
ANTONINUS

*TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL GREEK BY*  
JEREMY COLLIER

---

*WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY*  
ALICE ZIMMERN



# INTRODUCTION

## MARCUS AURELIUS

BY ALICE ZIMMERN

“UNTIL philosophers are kings, and the princes of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy, and political greatness and wisdom meet in one, cities will never cease from ill—no, nor the human race, as I believe—and then only will our state have a possibility of life, and see the light of day.” “The truth is, that the state in which the rulers are most reluctant to govern is best and most quietly governed, and the state in which they are most willing is the worst.”

Thus writes Plato in his *Republic*, laying down the conditions, which even to him appear impossible, under which a state may be wisely governed. The ruler must be a philosopher as well as a king; and he must govern unwillingly, because he loves philosophy better than dominion. Once in the history of the world these conditions were fulfilled: in Marcus Aurelius we find the philosopher-king, the ruler who preferred the solitude of the student to the splendour of the palace, the soldier who loved the arts of peace better than the glory of war. It is with no small interest that we turn to the records of history to see what was the outward life led by this king; but even more willingly do we open the precious record of his own thoughts, which reveal to us the inner life of the philosopher.

MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS was the adopted son of the Emperor Antoninus Pius, who died in 161 A.D. He had been brought up with the utmost care by his adoptive father, and received the best instruction in poetry and rhetoric, at that time the staples of a liberal education. But his favourite study was philosophy, and when only eleven years old he

assumed the philosophers' simple dress, adopted their mode of life; and finding that his inclination was chiefly towards Stoicism, he attached himself to this—the strictest of the philosophic schools. A discipline of monastic severity, that bade its followers disregard all bodily comfort, all that is commonly called pleasure, and care for nought but virtue, was indeed a strange training for one destined for the imperial purple, and it hardly appeared to be a fitting preparation for the cares of what was then the one great Empire of the world. True, the Stoics loved to call themselves citizens of the world, and to inculcate that cosmopolitanism that is broader and nobler than mere patriotism; but while they maintained in theory that the wise man should take part in politics, in practice there was always something in the existing state of things which made his doing so unadvisable. But Marcus Aurelius could not choose his own lot. Destined for the throne already by the Emperor Hadrian, associated in the empire even in his adoptive father's lifetime, he could but accept his lot, and in striving to practise the noble principles he had learnt, pay to his Stoic teachers the truest tribute.

His was a troubled reign. The Roman Empire, which in the vigorous days of the Republic had been gradually but surely extending its boundaries, had been consolidated, and newly administered by Julius Cæsar and Augustus. On the death of the latter it extended from the Atlantic on the west to the Armenian mountains and Arabian deserts on the east. On the south the African deserts had alone stopped the conquering arms, while on the north a line of natural boundaries was traced by the English Channel, Rhine, Danube, Black Sea, and Mount Caucasus. Warned by the ill-success that attended the later campaigns of his generals on the Lower Rhine, Augustus had cautioned his successors to aim at preserving rather than increasing their dominions. Thus it came about, that between the years 14 and 161 A.D., when Marcus Aurelius succeeded to the throne, only two fresh conquests had been made; Britain, a source of more trouble than profit to the empire, and Dacia, conquered by Trajan in 106 A.D.

Natural boundaries and Roman legions kept peace and security for many years within the circle of Roman dominion.

But there were two weak points on these borders. On the north the hardy German tribes on the Danube and Upper Rhine, themselves hard pressed by Slavonian intruders from Russia, threatened to invade the Roman dominion; on the east the "insolent Parthian," long the terror of the Roman arms, was a constant source of trouble and danger. The peace-loving Marcus Aurelius was obliged to cope with both these enemies. The arms, or rather the army, of the insolent and profligate Lucius Verus for a time subdued the Parthians, but no lasting peace was destined Marcus Aurelius. He himself conducted the campaigns on the Danube, and again and again beat back the northern enemy in wars, of which the chief interest to us now consists in the scant notes in the *Meditations*—"This among the Quadi," "this at Carmuntum," showing how these precious records of a pure and serene soul were composed amid the storms of battle and the elation of victory.

Nor were his troubles confined to foreign wars. The plague, imported from the East, ravaged Italy, though it did the state good service in carrying off Lucius Verus, Marcus's adoptive brother, whom, in obedience to the wishes of Antoninus, he had associated with himself in the empire. There were famines too in the land, with which the Emperor tried to cope by schemes of carefully-organised charity. And, lastly, Avidius Cassius, one of his most trusted and ablest generals, revolted in Syria, and tried to obtain for himself the empire, deeming it an easy matter to overcome a master who was so full of generosity and compassion that he could only inspire contempt in the mind of the unphilosophic soldier. The revolt was soon put down, but the leader was killed by one of his own officers. The Emperor expressed only his regret that he should have been thus deprived of the luxury of forgiveness, and he carefully destroyed all documents that could implicate any others in the revolt. Thus in all the trials of his life his philosophy inspired noble action, and he might worthily be added to the short list of those whom the Stoics acknowledged as really good and great.

Amid these records of gentleness and forbearance it seems strange to read that Marcus Aurelius permitted a cruel per-

secution of the Christians. Among the victims of this reign were Justin Martyr and Polycarp, and numbers suffered in a general persecution of the churches at Lyons and Vienne. It must not, however, be forgotten that the persecution was political rather than religious. Of the true teaching of Christianity Marcus Aurelius knew little and cared less; but its followers, in refusing to acknowledge a religion which included the Emperors among its deities, became rebels against the existing order of things, and therein culpable. Of the old sincere belief in the gods of Rome but little could survive in a state where the vote of the Senate had the power to add a new divinity to the already bewildering list. So much the more important were the outward forms, now that the actual belief was gone, and the bond between Church and State grew even closer, now that the Church could no longer stand alone. Of the various systems of philosophy at that time fashionable at Rome, all but the Epicurean could readily embody the creed of the old religion, and by treating the names of gods and heroes as mere symbols, they contrived to combine outward conformity with inner enlightenment. Not so the Christians. In their eyes the whole system of idolatry was accursed. A silent protest was insufficient. It was not enough to refrain from sacrifice themselves; in public and in private, in season and out of season, they exhorted others to do the like; not content with leaving the statues of the gods unhonoured, they would throw them from their pedestals, or insult them in the presence of the faithful. What wonder that the Romans looked on them with suspicion and hatred, and added to their real offences the pretended ones of eating human flesh and indulging in all manner of immorality. In our own more enlightened day we know what strange reports gather round any sect or school that happens to be unfashionable or unpopular. What wonder, then, that the secret meetings of the Christians should have given rise to strange rumours, and that the persecutions "were the expression of a feeling with which a modern state might regard a set of men who were at once Mormons and Nihilists."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> F. Myer's *Classical Essays*.



Add to this that the Christians often actually provoked persecution, and we cease to wonder, though we cannot but regret, that Marcus Aurelius, in simply allowing the law to take its course, should have failed to give an example of that perfect toleration to which Christianity itself has never yet attained. Let us be content to call him, with Farrar, "the noblest of Pagan Emperors," and sorrowfully acknowledge that we must seek in vain for a Christian monarch to place beside him.

Wars and troubles attended Marcus Aurelius to the very end of his days. In 177 A.D. fresh wars called him to the north. A presentiment seemed to tell his friends at Rome that they should not see him again, and they begged him to address them his farewell admonitions. There is nothing more striking in the whole of Aurelius' career than this picture of the great general discoursing for three days before his departure for the wars on the deep questions of philosophy. This was indeed the last time he was seen at Rome. Worn out by anxiety and fatigue, after once more winning victory for the Roman arms, he died, in Pannonia, on March 17th, 180 A.D., mourned with a note of such true sorrow as never before or again was raised at the death of an Emperor.

It is time to inquire into the nature of that philosophy which was capable of exercising an influence so distinctly practical; yet, when we consider its teachings as laid down by its founders, its distinct materialism and impracticable ethics afford little suggestion of such fruits as it was destined to bear in the Roman world.

The world is faultless, said the Greek Stoics, and must therefore have been produced by an intelligent artificer. Hence the highest reason is immanent in the world, and must be regarded as self-conscious and personal. For has it not created man, who is self-conscious and personal, and can the created be greater than the creator? And yet, paradoxical as it may seem, the Stoic god is not a person, but is the fiery ether that pervades all things. This fiery substratum of all matter is its soul; the soul of the universe, which holds together all things in one fixed law, is God himself. In one



aspect the Deity is but a fiery air-current; in another he is Zeus, the intelligent, almost personal lord of the universe. Both these aspects may be found in Marcus Aurelius; but in him the simpler ethical teaching, the gentle exhortation to a virtuous life, predominate over subtle speculation on the origin of things, and bespeaks of God in language that suggests vividly to us the omnipotent omniscient, Deity of Monotheism.

The Stoics traced back all things to formless matter and the informing, animating ether. Matter was in its nature eternal, since the underlying fire was imperishable; but all things were being gradually consumed, and at the end of a fixed period there would be a general conflagration, when all things should be reabsorbed into the Deity. Then once more they would be developed afresh, and another cycle begin.

“The world’s great age begins anew,  
The golden days return,  
The earth doth like a snake renew  
Her winter weeds outworn,”

sings Shelley, but the Stoics expected no “brighter Hellas,” or “fairer Tempes.” The new things should be but as the old; in the new cycle there should be another Socrates, destined to marry another Xanthippe, and meet with the same rough treatment at her hands, and finally to be accused by Anytus and Meletus, and once more utter his glorious defence, and drain the cup of hemlock among his sorrowing disciples.

Some such scheme of the universe was certainly accepted by all the Stoics, but the later teachers, at any rate, attached little importance to it, except in as far as it demonstrated man’s intimate connection with the Deity and his fellowmen. They believed that the soul was material, and extended in space. It is the fiery current that is diffused through the body, and holds it together. They regard it as the guiding or dominant principle, the indestructible divine spark. It is this, the reasoning element, which establishes the relationship between God, the universal reason, and man, to whose lot has fallen a minute share of it; while the brotherhood of Man is maintained in virtue of a kinship, not of flesh and blood,

but of mind and reason. "Though we are not just of the same flesh and blood, yet our minds are nearly related." (*Marcus Aurelius, Med. ii. 1.*)

Did the Stoics believe in a life after death? It is not easy to decide. They did not, like the Epicureans, fiercely deny it, maintaining that annihilation alone could remove the terrors of death. Undoubtedly the individual soul must at last be absorbed into the universal soul; but whether this happened at once, or not until the next conflagration, was a point on which authorities were not agreed. In any case, the soul must return to the Deity whence it sprang. This relation to the Deity was the fundamental point of Stoic ethics. It follows from the kinship that man's true good must lie in conformity with the Deity. But God and reason are identical. Therefore, life in accordance with reason must be best suited to the constitution of the soul. And such a life must be in accordance with virtue. Hence this is the highest good, and happiness consists in virtue.

Thus the Stoics arrive at their main thesis. Virtue alone is admirable, virtue is absolutely self-sufficient; the good man needs no help from circumstances, neither sickness nor adversity can harm him; he is a king, a god among men. All so-called good, if it be not moral good, is included in the class of "things intermediate," neither good nor bad. Such absolute claims for virtue had never before been made by any school. Aristotle had stipulated for sufficient external advantages to enable a man to devote himself without further care to the life of thought and virtue. The Stoics would permit of no such compromise. Virtue, and virtue only, was what they demanded. The virtuous man might be a slave, a victim to disease, to poverty, might be deprived of all he loved, yet he would remain solely and absolutely happy. Virtue was one and indivisible. Whoever was not virtuous was vicious; there was no middle course. Here was a point in their doctrine which could hardly be made to square with fact. We know too well that men are not divided into virtuous and vicious, but all possess some share of good and evil, and that most men desire what is right, and fail, when they do, from weakness rather than viciousness. The Stoics, who de-

manded absolute virtue and disregard of externals, had to confess that the wise men were few and the foolish legion; nay, when hard pressed to name their wise men, they would give a remarkable list—Hercules, Odysseus, Socrates, the Cynics Antisthenes and Diogenes; and in the later days of the school, Cato the younger, the only Stoic among the number.

Such a list alone appears to us sufficient condemnation of Stoicism in its earlier forms. Had no further advance been made, Stoicism would be of small interest to us now, but happily it was destined, as Capes remarks in his little handbook on Stoicism, to be “tempered by concessions to common sense.” The paradoxes about the wise man had been borrowed from Cynicism, which was regarded by the Stoics as “a counsel of perfection.” Diogenes in his tub, bidding Alexander stand out of his sunshine, might excite surprise and wonder; but a movement that should lead a whole community to abandon civilisation and resort to life in tubs would be distinctly retrogressive. In later times Christian hermits have at best saved their own souls, and the exhortations delivered by St. Simeon Stylites from the top of his pillar cannot have influenced the gaping multitude as much as a noble life led in their midst. Without the practical element there would have been no life in Christianity, and Stoicism similarly had to descend from its pedestal, and walk among men.

First of all, the theory of absolute good and evil had to be modified. Virtue was still the only real good, and vice the only real evil; but besides these they now admitted a class of “things to be preferred,” and another of “things to be avoided.” Among the former might be included health, good repute, and other advantages which had formerly been summarily disposed of as “indifferent.” Again, while the impossible wise man still remained the ideal of Stoicism, it was admitted that there might be good men with lofty aims and blameless lives who should yet dwell among men as their fellows. In short, the wide gap between the sage and the fool was now filled up, and as a result the Stoic system was able to find a place for real, existing human beings.

These more practical developments were coincident with its introduction into the Roman world. The Romans were

nothing if not practical. A nation of soldiers and lawyers, they had borrowed from Greece her culture, and adapted it to their own needs. So too they borrowed their philosophy. When "conquered Greece led her barbarous conqueror captive," a few of the nobler minds at Rome discovered that there was something at Athens worth carrying off besides the statues. Some would spend a year or two at Athens studying philosophy; others induced the greatest teachers themselves to bring their doctrines to Rome; and in the first century B.C. all the Greek systems were represented in the capital of the world. Among them all Stoicism found most adherents. Its teachings of simplicity, resignation, and calm in the midst of disturbance, found willing listeners among the earnest Republicans, who saw their hopes of liberty gradually fading before the approaching monarchy. Its doctrine that suicide was admissible, even admirable, when circumstances made it no longer possible "to take arms against a sea of troubles," pointed to a mode of escape from the tyranny they could not avert. Thus Cato sought death at his own hands when the Republic perished, and it was Stoic teaching that forbade Brutus and Cassius, though not Stoics themselves, to survive the battle of Philippi.

In the early days of the empire, when corruption and license were at their height, the court evinced deep hatred against the philosophers, more especially the Stoics. The outspoken manner in which they chastised the wickedness of the time may have led to their unpopularity; in any case, there were several decrees of banishment against them, and among the victims at one time was—

That halting slave, who in Nicopolis  
Taught Arrian, when Vespasian's brutal son  
Cleared Rome of what most shamed him.

Well might the name of Epictetus be counted among those who cheer the soul in evil days, for where can sweeter resignation or truer piety be found than in such words as these—"Dare to look up to God and say, Deal with me for the future as thou wilt, I am of the same mind as thou art; I am

thine: I refuse nothing that pleases thee: lead me where thou wilt: clothe me in any dress thou choosest: is it thy will that I should hold the office of a magistrate, that I should be in the condition of a private man, stay here or be an exile, be poor, be rich? I will make thy defence to men in behalf of all these conditions." These were not empty words, for they found their illustration in the life of the speaker.

In the lame slave Stoic ethics rose to its noblest heights; but it was left to the imperial philosopher, by broadening and humanising its teaching, to give to the world in his *Meditations* "the gospel of those who do not believe in the supernatural."

These *Meditations* were not written as a whole—probably they were never intended for publication; they were simply the Emperor's commonplace book, where he entered his reflections, often quite unconnected, on the things of time and eternity. By this means he seems to have adopted his own counsel of withdrawing into his own mind, there to seek calm and quiet. It is noteworthy that in Marcus Aurelius the claims of natural affection are never disregarded. Thus Book I. is entirely devoted to recording his obligation to his parents, friends, and teachers for the benefit of good training or example.

The lovers of Marcus Aurelius have been many, and of every shade of opinion. Long quotes from the preface to Pierron's translation—"A man illustrious in the church, the Cardinal Francis Barberini the elder, nephew of Pope Urban VIII., occupied the last years of his life in translating into his native language the thoughts of the Roman Emperor, in order to diffuse among the faithful the fertilising and vivifying seeds. He dedicated this translation to his soul, in order to make it, as he says, redder than his purple at the sight of the virtues of this Gentile." Montesquieu says of Marcus Aurelius: "You feel a secret pleasure within you when you speak this emperor; one can not read his life without a kind of tenderness. Such is the effect he produces that you have a better opinion of yourself, because you have a better opinion of mankind."

Matthew Arnold, in his *Essays in Criticism*, points out



with his usual clearness the reason of this popularity—"It is remarkable how little of a merely local or temporary character, how little of those *scoriæ* which a reader has to clear away before he gets to the precious ore, how little that even admits of doubt and question, the morality of Marcus Aurelius exhibits." "In general the action Marcus Aurelius prescribes is action which every sound nature must recognise as right, and the motives he assigns are motives which every clear reason must recognise as valid. And so he remains the special friend and comforter of all clear-headed and scrupulous, yet pure and upward-striving souls, in those ages most especially which walk by sight and not by faith, and yet have no open vision. He cannot give such souls, perhaps, all they yearn for, but he gives them much, and what he gives them they can receive."

Perhaps there never was an age that more needed such teaching than our own. On one hand, sectarian hatred and dogmatism almost obscure the great truths common to all mankind; on the other, merciless and destructive criticism, in undermining much that used to be generally accepted, seems at times to threaten even the foundations of truth. Here we may turn, as Renan bids us, to the "absolute religion" of the *Meditations*—"The religion of Marcus Aurelius is the absolute religion, that which arises from the simple fact of a high moral conscience facing the universe. It knows no race nor country. No revolution, no discovery can change it."

The *Meditations* appear here in the translation of Jeremy Collier, a book with a charm all its own, in fact, a version far more spirited than the original. "Jeremy Collier," observes Matthew Arnold, "regarded in Marcus Aurelius the living moralist, and not the dead classic; and his warmth of feeling gave to his style an impetuosity and rhythm which are absent from the style of Mr. Long [another translator]."

# THE MEDITATIONS OF MARCUS AURELIUS

## BOOK I

THE example of my grandfather Verus gave me a good disposition, not prone to anger.

By the recollection of my father's<sup>1</sup> character, I learned to be both modest and manly.

As for my mother, she taught me to have regard for religion, to be generous and open-handed, and not only to forbear from doing anybody an ill turn, but not so much as to endure the thought of it. By her likewise I was bred to a plain, inexpensive way of living, very different from the common luxury of the rich.

I have to thank my great-grandfather that I did not go to a public school, but had good masters at home, and learnt to know that one ought to spend liberally on such things.

From my governor I learned not to join either the green or the blue faction on the race-ground, nor to support the *Parmularius* or *Scutarius* at the gladiators' shows. He taught me also to put my own hand to business upon occasion, to endure hardship and fatigues, and to throw the necessities of nature into a little compass; that I ought not to meddle with other people's business, nor be easy in giving credit to informers.

From *Diognetus*, to shun vain pursuits, not to be led away with the impostures of wizards and soothsayers, who pretend they can discharge evil spirits, and do strange feats by the strength of a charm; not to keep quails for the pit, nor to be eager after any such thing. This *Diognetus* taught me to bear freedom and plain-dealing in others, and apply

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<sup>1</sup> *Annius Verus* was the name of both his grandfather and father; his mother's name was *Domitia Calvilla*. The emperor *T. Antoninus Pius* married the paternal aunt of *Marcus Aurelius*, and adopted him.



myself to philosophy. He also procured me the instruction of Bacchius, Tandasis, and Marcianus. He likewise put me upon improving myself by writing dialogues when I was a boy; prevailed with me to prefer a couch covered with hides to a bed of state; and reconciled me to other like rigours of the Grecian discipline.

It was Rusticus<sup>1</sup> that first made me desire to live rightly, and come to a better state; who prevented me from running into the vanity of sophists, either by writing speculative treatises, haranguing upon moral subjects, or making a fantastical appearance or display of generosity or discipline. This philosopher kept me from yielding to the charms of rhetoric and poetry, from affecting the character of a man of pleasantry, from wearing my senator's robe in the house, or anything of this kind which looks like conceit and affectation. He taught me to write letters in a plain, unornamental style, like that dated by him from Sinuessæ to my mother. By his instructions I was persuaded to be easily reconciled to those who had misbehaved themselves and disobliged me, as soon as they desired reconciliation. And of the same master I learned to read an author carefully. Not to take up with a superficial view, or assent quickly to idle talkers. And, to conclude with him, he gave me his own copy of Epictetus's memoirs.

Apollonius<sup>2</sup> taught me to give my mind its due freedom, and disengage it from dependence upon chance, and not to regard, though ever so little, anything uncountenanced by reason. To maintain an equality of temper, even in acute pains, and loss of children, or tedious sickness. His practice was an excellent instance, that a man may be forcible and yet unbend his humour as occasion requires. The heaviness and impertinence of his scholars could seldom rouse his ill-temper. As for his learning, and the peculiar happiness of his manner in teaching, he was so far from being proud of himself upon this score, that one might easily perceive, he thought it one of the least things which belonged to him. This great man let

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<sup>1</sup> L. Junius Rusticus was a Stoic philosopher who was put to death by Domitian.

<sup>2</sup> Apollonius of Chalcis was a Stoic philosopher.

me into the true secret of receiving an obligation, without either lessening myself, or seeming ungrateful to my friend.

The philosopher Sextus recommended good-humour to me, and showed me the pattern of a household governed in a fatherly manner. He also bade me make nature and reason my rule to live by. By his precedent I was instructed to appear with an unaffected gravity, to study the temper and circumstances of my friends in order to oblige them. I saw him bearing with the ignorant and undiscerning, complaisant and obliging to all people, so that his conversation was more charming than flattery; and yet at the same time he was held in the highest reverence by others. Conversing with this philosopher helped me to draw up a true, intelligible, and methodical scheme for life and manners, and never so much as to show the least sign of anger, or any other disturbing thought, but to be perfectly calm and indifferent, yet tender-hearted. However, he let me see in himself that a man might show his good-will significantly enough, without noise and display, and likewise possess great knowledge without vanity and ostentation.

Alexander the Grammarian taught me not to be ruggedly critical about words, nor find fault with people for improprieties of phrase or pronunciation, but to set them right by speaking the thing properly myself, and that either by way of answer, assent, or inquiry, or by some such other indirect and suitable correction.

Fronto<sup>1</sup> taught me that envy, tricking, and dissimulation are the character and consequences of tyranny; and that those we call patricians have commonly not much fatherly feeling in them.

Alexander the Platonist advised me, that without necessity I should never say to anyone, nor write in a letter, that I am not at leisure, nor make business an excuse to decline frequently the offices of humanity to those we dwell with.

I learned of Catulus<sup>2</sup> not to slight a friend for making a

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<sup>1</sup> M. Cornelius Fronto was a rhetorician who was the emperor's tutor. Part of Marcus Aurelius' correspondence with him is extant.

<sup>2</sup> Cinna Catulus was a Stoic philosopher.

remonstrance, though it should happen to be unreasonable, but rather to endeavour to restore him to his natural humour. That, like Domitius and Athenodotus, I should always speak well of those who had the care of my education, and that I should always preserve an hearty affection for my children.

I am indebted to Severus<sup>1</sup> for the love I bear to my relations, and towards justice and truth. He likewise made me acquainted with the character and sentiments of Cato, Brutus, Thrasea, Helvidius, and Dio; and gave me the idea of an equal commonwealth, with equal rights and equal speech, and also of a monarchy, where the liberty of the subject was principally regarded. To mention some more of my obligations to him:—It was of him I learned not to grow wise by starts and sudden fancies, but to be a constant admirer of philosophy and improvement; that a man ought to be generous and obliging, hope the best of matters, and never question the affection of his friends; to be free in showing a reasonable dislike of another, and no less clear in his own expectations and desires; and not to put his friends to the trouble of divining what he would be at.

I learned from Maximus<sup>2</sup> to command myself, and not to be too much drawn towards anything; to be full of spirits under sickness and misfortune; to appear with modesty, obligingness, and dignity of behaviour; to turn off business smoothly as it arises, without drudging and complaint. Whatever he did, all men believed him, that as he spoke, so he thought, and whatever he did, that he did with a good intent. He attained that greatness of mind, not to wonder or start at anything; neither to hurry an enterprise, nor sleep over it; never to be puzzled or dejected, nor to put on an appearance of friendliness; not to be angry or suspicious, but ever ready to do good, and to forgive and speak truth; and all this as one who seemed rather of himself to be straight and right, than ever to have been rectified. Nobody ever could fancy they were slighted by him, or dared to think themselves his betters. Besides all this, he had an agreeable wit.

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<sup>1</sup> Claudius Severus was a Stoic philosopher.

<sup>2</sup> Claudius Maximus was a Stoic philosopher.

In my adoptive father I observed a smooth and inoffensive temper, with great steadiness in keeping close to measures judiciously taken; a greatness proof against vanity and the impressions of pomp and power. From him a prince might learn to love business and action, and be constantly at it; to be willing to hear out any proposal relating to public advantage, and undeviatingly give every man his due; to understand the critical seasons and circumstances for rigour or remissness. To have no boy-favourites. Not to stand upon points of state and prerogative, but to leave his nobility at perfect liberty in their visits and attendance; and when he was upon his progress, no man lost his favour for not being at leisure to follow the court. To debate matters nicely and thoroughly at the council-board, and then to stand by what was resolved on, yet not hastily to give up the inquiry, as one easily satisfied with sudden notions and apprehensions. To be constant to a friend, without tiring or fondness. To be always satisfied and cheerful. To reach forward into the future, and manage accordingly. Not to neglect the least concerns, but all without hurry, or being embarrassed. Farther, by observing his methods and administrations, I had the opportunity of learning how much it was the part of a prince to check the excesses of panegyric and flattery. To have his magazines and exchequer well furnished. To be frugal in his expenses, without minding being lampooned for his pains. Not to worship the gods to superstition; not to court the populace, either by prodigality or compliment; but rather to be sober and firm upon all occasions, keeping things in a steady decorum, without chopping and changing of measures. To enjoy the plenty and magnificence of a sovereign fortune without bragging, and yet without making excuse; so as freely to enjoy them when present, but when wanting, not to be mortified at the loss of them. And to behave himself so that no man could charge him with sophistry, or buffooning, or being a pedant. No; he was a person mature and perfect, scorning flattery, and thoroughly qualified to govern himself and others. As for those that were philosophers in earnest, he had a great regard for them, but without reproaching those who were otherwise, nor yet being led away by these. He was con-



descending and familiar in conversation, and pleasant too, but not to tiresomeness and excess. As for his health, he was not anxious about it, like one fond of living, or over-studious of bodily appearance, and yet managed his constitution with that care as seldom to stand in need of the assistance of physic or outward applications. Farther, he never envied and browbeat those that were eminent in any faculty or science, as eloquence, or knowledge of the laws or morals; but, on the contrary, encouraged them in their ways, and promoted their reputation. He observed fitness and custom in all his actions, and yet did not seem to regard them. He was not fickle and fluttering in his humour, but constant both to place and undertaking; and I have seen him, after violent fits of the headache, return fresh and vigorous to his usual business. He kept but few things to himself, and those were secrets of government. He was very moderate and frugal in shows, public buildings, liberalities, and such like, being one that did not so much regard the popularity as the rightness of an action. It was none of his custom to bathe at unusual hours, or to be overcome with the fancy of building, to study eating and luxury, to value the curiosity of his clothes, or the shape and person of his servants. His cloak came from Lorium, his villa on the coast; at Lanuvium, he wore for the most part only a tunic; and at Tusculum he would scarcely so much as put on a cloak without making an excuse for it. To take him altogether, there was nothing of ruggedness, immodesty, or eagerness in his temper. Neither did he ever seem to drudge and sweat at the helm. Things were dispatched at leisure, and without being felt; and yet the administration was carried on without confusion, with great order, force, and uniformity. Upon the whole, what was told of Socrates is applicable to him; for he was so much master of himself, that he could either take or leave those conveniences of life with respect to which most people are either uneasy without them, or intemperate with them. Now, to hold on with fortitude in one condition and sobriety in the other is a proof of a great soul and an impregnable virtue, such as he showed in the sickness of Maximus.

I have to thank the gods that my grandfathers, parents,

sister, preceptors, relations, friends, and domestics were almost all of them persons of probity, and that I never happened to disoblige or misbehave myself towards any of them, notwithstanding that my disposition was such, that, had occasion offered, I might have acted thus; but by the goodness of the gods, I met with no provocations to reveal my infirmities. It is likewise by their providence that my childhood was no longer managed by my grandfather's mistress; that I preserved the flower of my youth; that I was subject to the emperor my father, and bred under him, who was the most proper person living to put me out of conceit with pride, and to convince me that it is possible to live in a palace without the ceremony of guards, without richness and distinction of habit, without torches, statues, or such other marks of royalty and state; and that a prince may shrink himself almost into the figure of a private gentleman, and yet act, nevertheless, with all the force and majesty of his character when the common weal requires it. It is the favour of the gods that I happened to meet with a brother, whose behaviour and affection is such as to contribute both to my pleasure and improvement.<sup>1</sup> It is also their blessing that my children were neither stupid nor misshapen; that I made no farther advances in rhetoric, poetry, and such other amusements, which possibly might have engaged my fancy too far, had I found myself a considerable proficient; that, without asking, I gave my governors that share of honour which they seemed to desire, and did not put them off from time to time with promises and excuses, because they were yet but young; that I had the happiness of being acquainted with Apollonius, Rusticus, and Maximus; that I have a clear idea of the life in accordance with nature, and the impression frequently refreshed: so that, considering the extraordinary assistance and directions of the gods, it is impossible for me to miss the road of nature unless by refusing to be guided by the dictates and almost sensible inspirations of heaven. It is by their favour that my con-

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<sup>1</sup> As Marcus Aurelius had no blood brother, this must refer to his adopted brother, Lucius Verus, who certainly did not deserve the praise here bestowed.



stitution has held out so well, under a life of fatigue and business; that I never had to do with Benedicta or Theodotus; and, when I fell into some fits of love, I was soon cured; that when I fell out with Rusticus, as it frequently happened, I was not transported into any act of violence; that I had the satisfaction of my mother's life and company a considerable while, though she was destined to die young; that when I was willing to relieve the necessities of others, I was never told that the exchequer was empty; and, again, it is they that kept me from standing in need of any man's fortune. Farther, it is from them that my wife is so very obedient and affectionate and so remote from luxury; that I had choice of good governors for my children; that remedies were prescribed me in a dream against giddiness and spitting of blood, as at Cajeta, by an ointment; that when I had a mind to look into philosophy, I did not meet with a sophist to instruct me; that I did not spend too much time in reading history, chopping logic, or considering the heavens. Now all these points could never have been compassed without a protection from above and the gods presiding over fate.

*This was written in the country of the Quadi, at the Granua.*

## BOOK II

REMEMBER to put yourself in mind every morning, that before night it will be your luck to meet with some busy-body, with some ungrateful, abusive fellow, with some knavish, envious, or unsociable churl or other. Now all this perverseness in them proceeds from their ignorance of good and evil; and since it has fallen to my share to understand the natural beauty of a good action, and the deformity of an ill one—since I am satisfied the person disobliging is of kin to me, and though we are not just of the same flesh and blood, yet our minds are nearly related, being both extracted from the Deity—I am likewise convinced that no man can do me a real injury, because no man can force me to misbehave myself, nor can I find it in my heart to hate or to be angry with one of my own nature and family. For we are all made for mutual assistance, as the feet, the hands, and the eyelids, as the rows

of the upper and under teeth, from whence it follows that clashing and opposition is perfectly unnatural. Now such an unfriendly disposition is implied in resentment and aversion.

This being of mine, all there is of it, consists of flesh, breath, and the ruling part. Away with your books then. Suffer not your mind any more to be distracted. It is not permitted. As for your body, value it no more than if you were just expiring. For what is it? Nothing but a little blood and bones; a piece of network, wrought out of nerves, veins, and arteries twisted together. In the next place, consider what sort of thing your breath is; why, only a little air, and that not constant, but every moment let out of your lungs, and sucked in again. The third part of your composition is the ruling part. Now consider thus: you are an old man: do not suffer this noble part of you under servitude any longer. Let it not be moved by the springs of selfish passions; let it not quarrel with fate, be uneasy at the present, or afraid of the future.

Providence shines clearly through the works of the gods; even the works of chance are not without dependence on Nature, being only an effect of that chain of causes which are under a providential regulation. Indeed, all things flow from this fountain; besides, there is necessity, and the interest of the whole universe, of which you are a part. Now, that which is both the product and support of universal Nature, must by consequence be serviceable to every part of it; but the world subsists upon change, and is preserved by the mutation of the simple elements, and also of things mixed and compounded, and what it loses one way it gets another. Let these reflections satisfy you, and make them your rule to live by. As for books, cast away your thirst after them, that you may not die complaining, but go off in good-humour, and heartily thank the gods for what you have had.

Remember how often you have postponed minding your interest, and let slip those opportunities the gods have given you. It is now high time to consider what sort of world you are part of, and from what kind of governor of it you are descended; that you have a set period assigned you to act in,

and unless you improve it to brighten and compose your thoughts, it will quickly run off with you, and be lost beyond recovery.

Take care always to remember that you are a man and a Roman; and let every action be done with perfect and unaffected gravity, humanity, freedom, and justice. And be sure you entertain no fancies, which may give check to these qualities. This is possible, if you will but perform every action as though it were your last; if your appetites and passions do not cross upon your reason; if you keep clear of rashness, and have nothing of insincerity and self-love to infect you, and do not complain of your destiny. You see what a few points a man has to gain in order to attain to a godlike way of living; for he that comes thus far, performs all which the immortal powers will require of him.

Continue to dishonour yourself, my soul! Neither will you have much time left to do yourself honour. For the life of each man is almost up already; and yet, instead of paying a due regard to yourself, you place your happiness in the souls of other men.

Do not let accidents disturb, or outward objects engross your thoughts, but keep your mind quiet and disengaged, that you may be at leisure to learn something good, and cease rambling from one thing to another. There is likewise another sort of roving to be avoided; for some people are busy and yet do nothing; they fatigue and wear themselves out, and yet aim at no goal, nor purpose any general end of action or design.

A man can rarely be unhappy by being ignorant of another's thoughts; but he that does not attend to the motions of his own is certainly unhappy.

These reflections ought always to be at hand:—To consider well the nature of the universe and my own nature, together with the relation betwixt them, and what kind of part it is, of what kind of whole; and that no mortal can hinder me from acting and speaking conformably to the being of which I am a part.

Theophrastus, in comparing the degrees of faults (as men would commonly distinguish them), talks like a philosopher

when he affirms that those instances of misbehaviour which proceed from desire are greater than those of which anger is the occasion. For a man that is angry seems to quit his hold of reason unwillingly and with pain, and start out of rule before he is aware. But he that runs riot out of desire, being overcome by pleasure, loses all hold on himself, and all manly restraint. Well, then, and like a philosopher, he said that he of the two is the more to be condemned that sins with pleasure than he that sins with grief. For the first looks like an injured person, and is vexed, and, as it were, forced into a passion; whereas the other begins with inclination, and commits the fault through desire.

Manage all your actions, words, and thoughts accordingly, since you may at any moment quit life. And what great matter is the business of dying? If the gods are in being, you can suffer nothing, for they will do you no harm. And if they are not, or take no care of us mortals—why, then, a world without either gods or Providence is not worth a man's while to live in. But, in truth, the being of the gods, and their concern in human affairs, is beyond dispute. And they have put it entirely in a man's power not to fall into any calamity properly so-called. And if other misfortunes had been really evils, they would have provided against them too, and furnished man with capacity to avoid them. But how can that which cannot make the man worse make his life so? I can never be persuaded that the universal Nature neglected these matters through want of knowledge, or, having that, yet lacked the power to prevent or correct the error; or that Nature should commit such a fault, through want of power or skill, as to suffer things, really good and evil, to happen promiscuously to good and bad men. Now, living and dying, honour and infamy, pleasure and pain, riches and poverty—all these things are the common allotment of the virtuous and vicious, because they have nothing intrinsically noble or base in their nature; and, therefore, to speak properly, are neither good nor bad.

Consider how quickly all things are dissolved and resolved; the bodies and substances themselves into the matter and substance of the world, and their memories into its



general age and time. Consider, too, the objects of sense, particularly those which charm us with pleasure, frighten us with pain, or are most admired for empty reputation. The power of thought will show a man how insignificant, despicable, and paltry these things are, and how soon they wither and die. It will show him what those people are upon whose fancy and good word the being of fame depends: also the nature of death, which, if once abstracted from the pomp and terror of the idea, will be found nothing more than a pure natural action. Now he that dreads the course of nature is a very child; but this is not only a work of nature, but is also profitable to her. Lastly, we should consider how we are related to the Deity, and in what part of our being, and in what condition of that part.

Nothing can be more unhappy than the curiosity of that man that ranges everywhere, and digs into the earth, as the poet<sup>1</sup> says, for discovery; that is wonderfully busy to force by conjecture a passage into other people's thoughts, but does not consider that it is sufficient to reverence and serve the divinity within himself. And this service consists in this, that a man keep himself pure from all violent passion, and evil affection, from all rashness and vanity, and from all manner of discontent towards gods or men. For as for the gods, their administration ought to be revered upon the score of excellency; and as for men, their actions should be well taken for the sake of common kindred. Besides, they are often to be pitied for their ignorance of good and evil; which incapacity of discerning between moral qualities is no less a defect than that of a blind man, who cannot distinguish between white and black.

Though you were to live three thousand, or, if you please, thirty thousand of years, yet remember that no man can lose any other life than that which he now lives, neither is he possessed of any other than that which he loses. Whence it follows that the longest life, as we commonly speak, and the shortest, come all to the same reckoning. For the present is of the same duration everywhere. Everybody's loss, therefore, is

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<sup>1</sup> Pindar quoted in the *Theætetus* of Plato.

of the same bigness and reaches no further than to a point of time, for no man is capable of losing either the past or the future; for how can one be deprived of what he has not? So that under this consideration there are two notions worth remembering. One is, that Nature treads in a circle, and has much the same face through the whole course of eternity. And therefore it signifies not at all whether a man stands gazing here an hundred, or two hundred, or an infinity of years; for all that he gets by it is only to see the same sights so much the oftener. The other hint is, that when the longest and shortest-lived persons come to die, their loss is equal; they can but lose the present as being the only thing they have; for that which he has not, no man can be truly said to lose.

Monimus, the Cynic philosopher, used to say that all things were but opinion. Now this saying may undoubtedly prove serviceable, provided one accepts it only as far as it is true.

There are several different ways by which a man's soul may do violence to itself; first of all, when it becomes an abscess, and, as it were, an excrescence on the universe, as far as in it lies. For to be vexed at anything that happens is a separation of ourselves from nature, in some part of which the natures of all other things are contained. Secondly, it falls under the same misfortune when it hates any person, or goes against him, with an intention of mischief, which is the case of the angry and revengeful. Thirdly, it wrongs itself when it is overcome by pleasure or pain. Fourthly, when it makes use of art, tricking, and falsehood, in word or action. Fifthly, when it does not know what it would be at in a business, but runs on without thought or design, whereas even the least undertaking ought to be aimed at some end. Now the end of rational beings is to be governed by the law and reason of the most venerable city and constitution.

The extent of human life is but a point; its substance is in perpetual flux, its perceptions dim, and the whole composition of the body tending to corruption. The soul is but a whirl, fortune not to be guessed at, and fame undiscerning—in a word, that which belongs to the body is a flowing river, and what the soul has is but dream and bubble. Life is but a



campaign, or course of travels, and after-fame is oblivion. What is it, then, that will stick by a man? Why, nothing but philosophy. Now, this consists in keeping the divinity within us from injury and disgrace, superior to pleasure and pain, doing nothing at random, without any dissembling and pretence, and independent of the motions of another. Farther, philosophy brings the mind to take things as they fall, and acquiesce in their distribution, inasmuch as all events proceed from the same cause with itself; and, above all, to have an easy prospect of death, as being nothing more than a dissolving of the elements of which each thing is composed. Now, if the elements themselves are never the worse for running off one into another, what if they should all change and be dissolved? Why should any man be concerned at the consequence? All this is but Nature's method; now, Nature never does any mischief.

*Written at Carnuntum.*

### BOOK III

WE ought not only to remember that life is wearing off, and a smaller part of it is left daily, but also to consider that if a man's life should happen to be longer than ordinary, yet it is uncertain whether his mind will keep pace with his years, and afford him sense enough for business, and power to contemplate things human and divine. For if the man begins to dote, it is true the mere animal life goes on; he may breathe, and be nourished, and be furnished with imagination and appetite; but to make any proper use of himself, to fill up the measure of his duty, to distinguish appearances, and to know whether it is time for him to walk out of the world or not—as to all such noble functions of reason and judgment, the man is perfectly dead already. It concerns us, therefore, to push forward, and make the most of our matters, for death is continually advancing; and besides that, our understanding sometimes dies before us.

It is worth while to observe that the least thing that happens naturally to things natural has something in itself that is pleasing and delightful. Thus, for example, there are cracks

and little breaks on the surface of a loaf, which, though never intended by the baker, have a sort of agreeableness in them, which invites the appetite. Thus figs, when they are most ripe, open and gape; and olives, when they fall of themselves and are near decaying, are particularly pretty to look at. The bending of an ear of corn, the brow of a lion, the foam of a boar, and many other things, if you take them singly, are far enough from being beautiful; but when they are looked on as effects of the products of Nature, help to adorn and attract. Thus, if a man has but inclination and thought enough to examine the product of the universe, he will find the most unpromising appearances in the results of Nature not without charm, and that the more remote appendages have somewhat to recommend them. One thus prepared will be no less pleased to see the gaping jaws of living beasts than the imitations of painters and sculptors, and with chastened eyes he will find beauty in the ripeness of age as well as in the blossom of youth. I grant many of these things will not charm everyone, but only those who are truly in harmony with Nature and her works.

Hippocrates, who cured so many diseases, himself fell ill and died. The Chaldeans, who foretold other people's death, at last met with their own fate. Alexander, Pompey, and Julius Cæsar, who had destroyed so many towns, and cut off so many thousands of horse and foot in the field, were forced at last to march off themselves. Heraclitus, who argued so much about the universal conflagration, died through water by a dropsy. Democritus was eaten up with vermin; another sort of vermin destroyed Socrates. What are these instances for? Look you: you have embarked, you have made your voyage and your port; debark then without more ado. If you happen to land upon another world, there will be gods enough to take care of you; but if it be your fortune to drop into nothing, why, then you will be no more solicited with pleasure and pain. Then you will have done drudging for your outer covering, which is the more unworthy in proportion as that which serves it is worthy; for the one is all soul, intelligence, and divinity, whereas the other is but dirt and corruption.

For the future, do not spend your thoughts upon other people, unless you are led to it by common interest. For the prying into foreign business—that is, musing upon the talk, fancies, and contrivances of another, and guessing at the what and why of his actions—does but make a man forget himself, and ramble from his own guiding principle. He ought, therefore, not to work his mind to no purpose, nor throw a superfluous link into the chain of thought; and more especially, to avoid curiosity and malice in his inquiry. Accustom yourself, therefore, to think upon nothing but what you could freely reveal, if the question were put to you; so that if your soul were thus laid open, there would nothing appear but what was sincere, good-natured, and public-spirited—not so much as one voluptuous or luxurious fancy, nothing of hatred, envy, or unreasonable suspicion, nor aught else which you could not bring to the light without blushing. A man thus qualified, who does not delay to assume the first rank among mortals, is a sort of priest and minister of the gods, and makes a right use of the Deity within him. By the assistance thereof, he is preserved, uninfected with pleasure, invulnerable against pain—out of the reach of injury, and above the malice of evil people. Thus he wrestles in the noblest fight, to hold his own against all his passions; and penetrated with the spirit of justice, welcomes with his whole heart all that happens and is allotted to him. He never minds other people's speech, thoughts, or actions, unless public necessity and general good require it. No; he keeps himself to his own business, and contemplates that portion of the whole allotted him by the fates, and endeavours to do the first as it should be, and believes that his lot is good. For every man's fate is suitable, since it is suited to him. He considers that the rational principle is akin in all men, and that general kindness and concern for the whole world is no more than a piece of human nature—that not every one's good opinion is nor worth the gaining, but only that of those who seek to live in accordance with Nature. As for others, he knows their way of living, both at home and abroad, by day and by night, and their companions in their evil way of life, and he bears it in mind. And, why, indeed, should he value the commenda-

tion of such people, who are not able even to please themselves?

Be not unwilling, selfish, unadvised, or passionate in anything you do. Do not affect quaintness and points of wit: neither talk nor meddle more than is necessary. Take care that the divinity within you has a creditable charge to preside over; that you appear in the character of your sex and age. Act like a Roman Emperor that loves his country, and be always in a readiness to quit the field at the first summons; and ere you claim your discharge, manage your credit so, that you need neither swear yourself nor want a voucher. Let your air be cheerful; depend not upon external supports, nor beg your tranquillity of another. And, in a word, never throw away your legs, to stand upon crutches.

If, in the whole compass of human life, you find anything preferable to justice and truth; to temperance and fortitude; to a mind self-satisfied with its own rational conduct, and entirely resigned to fate—if, I say, you know anything better than this, turn to it with your whole soul, and enjoy it, accounting it the best. But if there is nothing more valuable than the divinity implanted within you, and this is master of its appetites, examines all impressions, and has detached itself from the senses, as Socrates used to say, and shows itself submissive to the government of the gods, and helpful and benevolent to mankind—if all things are trifles compared with this, give way to nothing else. For if you are once inclined to any such thing, it will no longer be in your power to give your undivided preference to what is your own peculiar good, for it is not lawful that anything of another kind or nature, as either popular applause, or power, or riches, or pleasures, should be suffered to contest with what is rationally and politically good. All these things, if but for a while they begin to please, presently prevail, and pervert a man's mind. Let your choice therefore run all one way, and be bold and resolute for that which is best. Now what is profitable is best. If that means profitable to man as he is a rational being, stand to it; but if it means profitable to him as a mere animal, reject it, and keep your judgment without arrogance. Only take care to make inquiry secure.



Think nothing for your interest which makes you break your word, quit your modesty, hate, suspect, or curse any person, or inclines you to any practice which will not bear the light and look the world in the face. For he that values his mind and the worship of his divinity before all other things, need act no tragic part, laments under no misfortune, and wants neither solitude nor company; and, which is still more, he will neither fly from life nor pursue it, but is perfectly indifferent about the length or shortness of the time in which his soul shall be encompassed by his body. And if he were to expire this moment, he is as ready for it as for any other action that may be performed with modesty and decency. For all his life long, this is his only care—that his mind may always be occupied as befits a rational and social creature.

If you examine a man that has been well-disciplined and purified by philosophy, you will find nothing that is unsound, foul, or false in him. Death can never surprise his life as imperfect, so that nobody can say he goes off the stage before his part is quite played. Besides, there is in him nothing servile or affected; he neither attaches himself too closely to others, nor keeps aloof from them; he is neither responsible to them, nor does he avoid them.

Hold in honour your opinionative faculty, for this alone is able to prevent any opinion from originating in your guiding principle that is contrary to Nature or the proper constitution of a rational creature. Now, a rational constitution enjoins us to do nothing rashly, and to be kindly disposed towards men, and to submit willingly to the gods.

As for other speculations, throw them all out of your head, excepting those few precepts above mentioned—remembering withal, that every man's life lies all within the present, which is but a point of time; for the past is spent, and the future is uncertain. Life moves in a very narrow compass; yes, and men live in a small corner of the world too. And the most lasting fame will stretch but to a sorry extent; for, alas! poor transitory mortals who hand it down know little even of themselves, much less of those who died long before their time.

To the foregoing hints you may add this which follows:—

make for yourself a particular description and definition of every object that presents itself to your mind, that you may thoroughly contemplate it in its own nature, bare and naked, wholly and separately. And in your own mind call itself and the parts of which it is composed, and into which it will be resolved, by its own and proper name; for nothing is so likely to raise the mind to a pitch of greatness as the power truly and methodically to examine and consider all things that happen in this life, and so to penetrate into their natures as to apprehend at once what sort of purpose each thing serves, and what sort of universe makes use of it—what value it bears to the whole, and what to man, who is a citizen of that great capital, in respect of which all other towns are no more than single families—what is this object which makes an impression on me; how long can it last; what virtue does it require of me; is it good-nature, fortitude, truth, simplicity, self-sufficiency, or any of the rest? On each occasion a man should be ready to pronounce, “This was sent me by heaven, this by destiny, or the combinations of fate, or by one of the same clan, or family, or company as myself, who knows not what is natural for him. But I do know; therefore I am just and friendly to him, and treat him according to the natural laws of our communion. However, in things indifferent I take care to rate them according to their respective value.”

If you will be governed by reason, and manage what lies before you with industry, vigour, and temper; if you will not run out after new distraction, but keep your divinity pure, even as though you must at once render it up again, your mind staunch and well disciplined, as if this trial of behaviour were your last; and, if you will but cleave to this, and be true to the best of yourself, fearing and desiring nothing, but living up to your nature, standing boldly by the truth of your word, and satisfied therewith, then you will be a happy man. But the whole world cannot hinder you from so doing.

As surgeons always have their instruments and knives ready for sudden occasions, so be you always furnished with rules and principles to let you into the knowledge of things human and divine, remembering even in your slightest action the connection these two have with each other. For without



a regard for things divine, you will fail in your behaviour towards men; and again, the reasoning holds for the other side of the argument.

Wander at random no longer. Alas! you have no time left to peruse your diary, to read over the Greek and Roman history, or so much as your own commonplace book, which you collected to serve you when you were old. Hasten then towards the goal. Do not flatter and deceive yourself. Come to your own aid while yet you may, if you have a kindness for yourself.

Men do not know in how many senses they can take the words to steal, to buy, to sow, to be quiet, to see what should be done; for this is not effected by eyes, but by another kind of vision.

There are three things which belong to a man—body, soul, and mind. Sensation belongs to the body, impulse to the soul, and reason to the mind. To have the senses stamped with the impression of an object is common to brutes and cattle; to be hurried and convulsed with passion is the quality of beasts of prey and men of pleasure—such as Phalaris and Nero—of atheists and traitors, too, and of those who do not care what they do when no man sees them. Now, since these qualities are common, let us find out the mark of a man of probity. His distinction, then, lies in letting reason guide his practice, in contentment with all that is allotted him, keeping pure the divinity within him, untroubled by a crowd of appearances, preserving it tranquil, and obeying it as a god. He is all truth in his words and justice in his actions; and if the whole world should disbelieve his integrity, dispute his character, and question his happiness, he would neither take it ill in the least, nor turn aside from that path that leads to the aim of life, towards which he must move pure, calm, well-prepared, and with perfect resignation in his fate.

## BOOK IV

WHEN the mind acts up to Nature, she is rightly disposed, and takes things as they come, and tacks about with her circumstances; as for fixing the condition of her activity, she

is not at all solicitous about that. It is true, she is not perfectly indifferent; she moves forward with a preference in her choice; but if anything comes cross, she falls to work upon it, and like fire converts it into fuel; for like this element, when it is weak, it is easily put out, but when once well kindled it seizes upon what is heaped upon it, subdues it into its own nature, and increases by resistance.

Let every action tend to some point, and be perfect in its kind.

It is the custom of people to go to unfrequented places and country places and the sea-shore and the mountains for retirement; and this you often earnestly desired. But, after all, this is but a vulgar fancy, for it is in your power to withdraw into yourself whenever you desire. Now one's own mind is a place the most free from crowd and noise in the world, if a man's thoughts are such as to ensure him perfect tranquillity within, and this tranquillity consists in the good ordering of the mind. Your way is, therefore, to make frequent use of this retirement, and refresh your virtue in it. And to this end, be always provided with a few short, uncontested notions, to keep your understanding true, and send you back content with the business to which you return. For instance: What is it that troubles you? It is the wickedness of the world. If this be your case, out with your antidote, and consider that rational beings were made for mutual advantage, that forbearance is one part of justice, and that people misbehave themselves against their will. Consider, likewise, how many men have embroiled themselves, and spent their days in disputes, suspicion, and animosities; and now they are dead, and burnt to ashes. Be quiet, then, and disturb yourself no more. But, it may be, the distribution of the world does not please you. Recall the alternative, and argue thus: either Providence or atoms rule the universe. Besides, you may recall the proofs that the world is, as it were, one great city and corporation. But possibly the ill state of your health afflicts you. Pray reflect, your intellect is not affected by the roughness or smoothness of the currents of sensation, if she will retire and take a view of her own privilege and power. And when she has

done this, recollect the philosophy about pleasure and pain, to which you have even now listened and assented. Well! it may be the concern of fame sits hard upon you. If you are pinched here, consider how quickly all things vanish, and are forgotten—what an immense chaos there stands on either side of eternity. Applause! consider the emptiness of the sound, the precarious tenure, the little judgment of those that give it us, and the narrow compass it is confined to; for the whole globe is but a point; and of this little, how small is your habitation, and how insignificant the number and quality of your admirers. Upon the whole, do not forget to retire into the little realm of your own. And, above all things, let there be no straining nor struggling in the case, but move freely, and contemplate matters like a human being, a citizen, and a mortal. And among the rest of your stock, let these two maxims be always ready: first, that things cannot disturb the soul, but remain motionless without, while disturbance springs from the opinion within the soul. The second is, to consider that the scene is just shifting and sliding off into nothing; and that you yourself have seen abundance of great alterations. In a word, the world is all transformation, and life is opinion.

If the faculty of understanding lies in common amongst us all, then reason, the cause of it, must be common too; and that other reason too which governs practice by commands and prohibitions. From whence we may conclude, that mankind are under one common law; and if so, they must be fellow-citizens, and belong to some body politic. From whence it will follow, that the whole world is but one commonwealth; for certainly there is no other society in which mankind can be incorporated. Now this common fund of understanding, reason, and law is a commodity of this same country, or which way do mortals light on it? For as the four distinctions in my body belong to some general head and species of matter; for instance, the earthy part in me comes from the division of earth; the watery belongs to another element; the airy particles flow from a third spring, and those of fire from one distinct from all the former (for nothing can no more produce something, than something

can sink into nothing) ; thus it is evident that our understanding must proceed from some source or other.

Death and generation are both mysteries of nature, and somewhat resemble each other; for the first does but dissolve those elements the latter had combined. Now there is nothing that a man need be ashamed of in all this; nothing that is opposed to his nature as a rational being, and to the design of his constitution.

Practices and dispositions are generally of a piece; such usage from such sort of men is in a manner necessary. To be surprised at it, is in effect to wonder that the fig-tree yields juice. Pray consider that both you and your enemy are dropping off, and that ere long your very memories will be extinguished.

Do not suppose you are hurt, and your complaint ceases. Cease your complaint, and you are not hurt.

That which does not make a man worse, does not make his life worse; and by consequence he has no harm either within or without.

The nature of the general good was obliged to act in this manner.

Take notice that all events turn out justly, and that if you observe nicely, you will not only perceive a connection between causes and effects, but a sovereign distribution of justice, which presides in the administration, and gives everything its due. Observe, then, as you have begun, and let all your actions answer the character of a good man—I mean a good man in the strictness and notion of philosophy.

If a man affronts you, do not accept his opinion or think just as he would have you do. No, look upon things as reality presents them.

Be always provided with principles for these two purposes:—*First*, To engage in nothing but what reason dictates, what the sovereign and legislative part of you shall suggest, for the interest of mankind. *Secondly*, To be disposed to quit your opinion, and alter your measures, when a friend shall give you good grounds for so doing. But then the reasons of changing your mind ought to be drawn from some consideration regarding justice and public good, or

some such generous motive, and not because it pleases your fancy, or promotes your reputation.

Have you any sense in your head? Yes. Why do you not make use of it then? For if this faculty does but do its part, I cannot see what more you need wish for.

At present your nature is distinct; but ere long you will vanish into the world. Or, rather, you will be returned into that universal reason which gave you your being.

When frankincense is thrown upon the altar, one grain usually falls before another; but it makes no difference.

Do but turn to the principles of wisdom, and those who take you now for a monkey or a wild beast, will make a god of you in a week's time.

Do not act as if you had ten thousand years to throw away. Death stands at your elbow. Be good for something, while you live and it is in your power.

What a great deal of time and ease that man gains who lets his neighbour's words, thoughts, and behaviour alone, confines his inspections to himself, and takes care that his own actions are honest and righteous. "Truly," as Agathon observes, "we should not wander thus, but run straight to the goal without rambling and impertinence."

He that is so very solicitous about being talked of when he is dead, and makes his memory his inclination, does not consider that all who knew him will quickly be gone. That his fame will grow less in the next generation, and flag upon the course; and handed from one to another by men who eagerly desire it themselves, and are quenched themselves, it will be quenched at last; but granting your memory and your men immortal, what is their panegyric to you? I do not say, when you are dead, but if you were living, what would commendation signify, unless for some reason of utility? To conclude; if you depend thus servilely upon the good word of other people, you will be unworthy of your nature.

Whatever is good has that quality from itself; it is finished by its own nature, and commendation is no part of it. Why, then, a thing is neither better nor worse for being praised. This holds concerning things which are called good in the common way of speaking, as the products of nature



and art; what do you think, then, of that which deserves this character in the strictest propriety? It wants nothing foreign to complete the idea any more than law, truth, good nature, and sobriety. Do any of these virtues stand in need of a good word, or are they the worse for a bad one? I hope an emerald will shine nevertheless for a man's being silent about the worth of it. Neither is there any necessity of praising gold, ivory, purple, a lyre, a dagger, a little flower, or a shrub.

If human souls have a being after death, which way has the air made room for them from all eternity? Pray, how has the earth been capacious enough to receive all the bodies buried in it? The solution of this latter question will satisfy the former. For as a corpse after some continuance by change and dissolution makes way for another, so when a man dies, and the spirit is let loose into the air, it holds out for some time, after which it is changed, diffused, and kindled in flame, or else absorbed into the generative principle of the universe. And thus they make room for succession. And this may serve for an answer upon the supposition of the soul's surviving the body. Besides, we are only to consider the vast number of bodies disposed of in the manner above mentioned; but what an infinite number are every day devoured by mankind, and other living creatures, and as it were buried in their bodies. And yet by the transmutation of the food into the blood, or into fire and air, there is space enough. And now which way can a man investigate the truth? Why, in order to this, he must divide the thing in question into the causal and material elements.

Do not run riot; keep your intention honest, and your convictions sure.

Whatever is agreeable to you, O Universe, is so to me too. Nothing is early or late for me that is seasonable for you. Everything is fruit for me which your seasons bring, oh Nature. From you all things proceed, subsist in you, and return to you. And if the poet said, "Dear City of Cecrops," may we not also say, "Dear City of God"?

"If you would live at your ease," says Democritus, "manage but a few things." I think it had been better if he had



said, "Do nothing but what is necessary; and what becomes the reason of a social being, and in the order too it prescribes it." For by this rule a man has the double pleasure of making his actions good and few into the bargain. For the greater part of what we say and do, being unnecessary, if this were but once retrenched, we should have both more leisure and less disturbance. And therefore before a man sets forward he should ask himself this question, "Am I not upon the verge of something unnecessary?" Farther, we should apply this hint to what we think, as well as to what we do. For impertinence of thought draws unnecessary action after it.

Make an experiment upon yourself, and examine your proficiency in a life of virtue. Try how you can acquiesce in your fate, and whether your own honesty and good nature will content you.

Have you seen this side? Pray view the other too. Never be disturbed, but let your purpose be single. Is any man guilty of a fault? It is to himself then. Has any advantage happened to you? It is the bounty of fate. It was all of it preordained you by the universal cause, and woven in your destiny from the beginning. On the whole, life is but short, therefore be just and prudent, and make the most of it. And when you divert yourself, be always upon your guard.

The world is either the effect of contrivance or chance; if the latter, it is a world for all that, that is to say, it is a regular and beautiful structure. Now can any man discover symmetry in his own shape, and yet take the universe for a heap of disorder? I say the universe, in which the very discord and confusion of the elements settle into harmony and order.<sup>1</sup>

A black character, an effeminate character, an obstinate character, brutish, savage, childish, silly, false, scurrilous, mercenary, tyrannical.

Not to know what is in the world, and not to know what is done in the world, comes much to the same thing, and a

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<sup>1</sup> The Greek word for Universe and Order is the same—*kosmos*.

man is one way no less a stranger than the other. He is no better than a deserter that flies from public law. He is a blind man that shuts the eyes of his understanding; and he is a beggar that is not furnished at home, but wants the assistance of another. He that frets himself because things do not happen just as he would have them, and secedes and separates himself from the law of universal nature, is but a sort of an ulcer of the world, never considering that the same cause which produced the displeasing accident made him too. And lastly, he that is selfish, and cuts off his own soul from the universal soul of all rational beings, is a kind of voluntary outlaw.

This philosopher has never a tunic to his coat, the other never a book to read, and a third is half naked, and yet they are none of them discouraged. One learned man says, "I have no bread, yet I abide by reason." Another, "I have no profit of my learning, yet I too abide by reason."

Be satisfied with your business, and learn to love what you were bred to; and as to the remainder of your life, be entirely resigned, and let the gods do their pleasure with your body and your soul. And when this is done, be neither slave nor tyrant to anybody.

To begin somewhere, consider how the world went in Vespasian's time; consider this, I say, and you will find mankind just at the same pass they are now: some marrying and some concerned in education, some sick and some dying, some fighting and some feasting, some drudging at the plough and some upon the exchange; some too affable and some overgrown with conceit; one full of jealousy and the other of knavery. Here you might find a group wishing for the death of their friends, and there a seditious club complaining of the times. Some were lovers and some misers, some grasped at the consulship and some at the sceptre. Well! all is over with that generation long since. Come forward then to the reign of Trajan. Now here you will find the same thing, but they are all gone too. Go on with the contemplation, and carry it to other times and countries, and here you will see abundance of people very busy with their projects,

who are quickly resolved into their elements. More particularly recollect those within your own memory, who have been hurried on in these vain pursuits; how they have overlooked the dignity of their nature, and neglected to hold fast to that, and be satisfied with it. And here you must remember to proportion your concern to the weight and importance of each action. Thus, if you refrain from trifling, you may part with amusements without regret.

Those words which were formerly current are now become obsolete. Alas! this is not all; fame tarnishes in time too, and men grow out of fashion as well as language. Those celebrated names of Camillus, Cæso, Volesus, and Leonnatus are antiquated. Those of Scipio, Cato, and Augustus will soon have the same fortune, and those of Hadrian and Antoninus must follow. All these things are transitory, and quickly become as a tale that is told, and are swallowed up in oblivion. I speak this of those who have been the wonder of their age and who shone with unusual lustre. But as for the rest, they are no sooner dead than forgotten. And after all, what does fame everlasting mean? Mere vanity. What then is it that is worth one's while to be concerned for? Why nothing but this: to bear an honest mind, to act for the good of society, to deceive nobody, to welcome everything that happens as necessary and familiar, and flowing from a like source.

Put yourself frankly into the hands of fate, and let her spin you out what fortune she pleases.<sup>1</sup>

He that does a memorable action, and those that report it, are all but short-lived things.

Accustom yourself to consider that whatever is produced, is produced by alteration; that nature loves nothing so much as changing existing things, and producing new ones like them. For that which exists at present is, as it were, the seed of what shall spring from it. But if you take seed in the

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<sup>1</sup> Clotho was one of the Fates. They were three sisters—Clotho, the spinning fate; Lachesis, the one who assigns to man his fate; and Atropos, the sister who cut the thread when a man's destiny was accomplished.

common notion, and confine it to the field or the womb, you have a dull fancy.

You are just taking leave of the world, and yet you have not done with unnecessary desires. Are you not yet above disturbance and suspicion, and fully convinced that nothing without can hurt you? You have not yet learned to be friends with everybody, and that to be an honest man is the only way to be a wise one.

To understand the true quality of people, you must look into their minds, and examine their pursuits and aversions.

Your pain cannot originate in another man's mind, nor in any change or transformation of your corporeal covering. Where then does it lie? Why, in that part of you that forms judgments about things evil. Do not imagine you are hurt, and you are impregnable. Suppose then your flesh was hacked, burnt, putrified, or mortified, yet let that part that judges keep quiet; that is, do not conclude that what is common to good or ill men can be good or evil in itself. For that which may be everybody's lot, must in its own nature be indifferent.

You ought frequently to consider that the world is an animal, consisting of one soul and body, that an universal sense runs through the whole mass of matter. You should likewise reflect how nature acts by a joint effort, and how everything contributes to the being of everything: and lastly, what connection and subordination there is between causes and effects.

Epictetus will tell you that you are a living soul, that drags a corpse about with her.

Things that subsist upon change, and owe their being to instability, can neither be considerably good nor bad.

Time is like a rapid river, and a rushing torrent of all that comes and passes. A thing is no sooner well come, but it is past; and then another is borne after it, and this too will be carried away.

Whatever happens is as common and well known as a rose in the spring, or an apple in autumn. Of this kind are diseases and death, calumny and trickery, and every other

thing which raises and depresses the spirits of unthinking people.

Antecedents and consequents are dexterously tied together in the world. Things are not carelessly thrown on a heap, and joined more by number than nature, but, as it were, rationally connected with each other. And as the things that exist are harmoniously connected, so those that become exhibit no mere succession, but an harmonious relationship.

Do not forget the saying of Heraclitus, "That the earth dies into water, water into air, air into fire, and so backward." Remember likewise the story of the man that travelled on without knowing to what place the way would bring him; and that many people quarrel with that reason that governs the world, and with which they are daily conversant, and seem perfectly unacquainted with those things which occur daily. Farther, we must not nod over business—for even in sleep we seem to act,—neither are we to be wholly governed by tradition; for that is like children, who believe anything their parents tell them.

Put the case, some god should acquaint you you were to die to-morrow, or next day at farthest. Under this warning, you would be a very poor wretch if you should strongly solicit for the longest time. For, alas! how inconsiderable is the difference? In like manner, if you would reason right, you would not be much concerned whether your life was to end to-morrow or a thousand years hence.

Consider how many physicians are dead that used to knit their brows over their patients; how many astrologers who thought themselves great men by foretelling the death of others; how many philosophers have gone the way of all flesh, after all their learned disputes about dying and immortality; how many warriors, who had knocked so many men's brains out; how many tyrants, who managed the power of life and death with as much insolence, as if themselves had been immortal; how many cities, if I may say so, have given up the ghost: for instance, Helice in Greece, Pompeii and Herculaneum in Italy; not to mention many besides. Do but recollect your acquaintance, and here you will find one



man closing another's eyes, then he himself is laid out, and this one by another. And all within a small compass of time. In short, mankind are poor transitory things! They are one day in the rudiments of life and almost the next turned to mummy or ashes. Your way is therefore to manage this minute in harmony with nature, and part with it cheerfully; and like a ripe olive when you drop, be sure to speak well of the mother that bore you, and make your acknowledgments to the tree that produced you.

Stand firm like a rock, against which though the waves batter, yet it stands unmoved, and they fall to rest at last. How unfortunate has this accident made me, cries such an one! Not at all! He should rather say, What a happy mortal am I for being unconcerned upon this occasion! for being neither crushed by the present, nor afraid of what is to come. The thing might have happened to any other man as well as myself; but for all that, everybody would not have been so easy under it. Why then is not the good fortune of the bearing more considerable than the ill fortune of the happening? Or, to speak properly, how can that be a misfortune to a man which does not frustrate his nature? And how can that cross upon a man's nature which is not opposed to the intention and design of it? Now what that intention is, you know. To apply this reasoning: does the present accident hinder your being just, magnanimous, temperate and modest, judicious, truthful, reverent, and unservile? Now, when a man is furnished with these good qualities, his nature has what she would have. Farther, when everything grows troublesome, recollect this maxim: This accident is not a misfortune, but bearing it well turns it to an advantage.

To consider those old people that resigned life so unwillingly, is a common yet not unserviceable aid in facing death. For what are these long-lived mortals more than those that went off in their infancy? What has become of Cadicianus, Fabius, Julianus, and Lepidus, and others like them? They buried a great many, but came at last to it themselves. Upon the whole, the difference between long and short life is insignificant, especially if you consider the accidents, the company, and the body you must go

through with. Therefore do not let a thought of this kind affect you. Do but look upon the astonishing notion of time and eternity; what an immense deal has run out already, and how infinite it is still in the future. Do but consider this, and you will find three days and three ages of life come much to the same thing.

Always go the shortest way to work. Now, the nearest road to your business is the road of nature. Let it be your constant method, then, to be sound in word and in deed, and by this means you need not grow fatigued, you need not quarrel, flourish and dissemble like other people.

## BOOK V

WHEN you find an unwillingness to rise early in the morning, make this short speech to yourself: I am getting up now to do the business of a man; and am I out of humour for going about that I was made for, and for the sake of which I was sent into the world? Was I then designed for nothing but to doze and keep warm beneath the counterpane? Well! but this is a comfortable way of living. Granting that: were you born only for pleasure? were you never to do anything? Is not action the end of your being? Pray look upon the plants and birds, the ants, spiders, and bees, and you will see them all exerting their nature, and busy in their station. Pray, shall not a man act like a man? Why do you not rouse your faculties, and hasten to act according to your nature? For all that, there is no living without rest. True; but nature has fixed a limit to eating and drinking, and here, too, you generally exceed bounds, and go beyond what is sufficient. Whereas in business you are apt to do less than lies in your power. In earnest, you have no true love for yourself. If you had, you would love your nature and honour her wishes. Now, when a man loves his trade, how he will sweat and drudge to perform to perfection. But you honour your nature less than a turner does the art of turning, a dancing-master the art of dancing. And as for wealth and popularity, how eagerly are they pursued by the vain and the covetous? All these people when they greatly desire

anything, seek to attain it, might and main, and will scarcely allow themselves necessary refreshment. And now, can you think the exercise of social duties less valuable than these petty amusements, and worth less exertion?

What an easy matter it is to stem the current of your imagination, to discharge a troublesome or improper thought, and at once return to a state of calm.

Do not think any word or action beneath you which is in accordance with nature; and never be misled by the apprehension of censure or reproach. Where honesty prompts you to say or do anything never hold it beneath you. Other people have their own guiding principles and impulses; mind them not. Go on in the straight road, pursue your own and the common interest. For to speak strictly, these two are approached by one and the same road.

I will march on in the path of nature till my legs sink under me, and then I shall be at rest, and expire into that air which has given me my daily breath; fall upon that earth which has maintained my parents, helped my nurse to her milk, and supplied me with meat and drink for so many years; and though its favours have been often abused, still suffers me to tread upon it.

Wit and smartness are not your talent. What then? There are a great many other good qualities in which you cannot pretend nature has failed you; improve them as far as you can, and let us have that which is perfectly in your power. You may if you please behave yourself like a man of gravity and good faith, endure hardship, and despise pleasure; want but a few things, and complain of nothing; you may be gentle and magnanimous if you please, and have nothing of luxury or trifling in your disposition. Do not you see how much you may do if you have a mind to it, where the plea of incapacity is out of place? And yet you do not push forward as you should do. What then! Does any natural defect force you to grumble, to lay faults upon your constitution, to be stingy or a flatterer, to seek after popularity, boast, and be disturbed in mind? Can you say you are so weakly made as to be driven to these practices? The immortal gods know the contrary. No, you might have stood clear of all

this long since; and after all, if your parts were somewhat slow, and your understanding heavy, your way had been to have taken the more pains with yourself, and not to have lain fallow and remained content with your own dulness.

Some men, when they do you a kindness, at once demand the payment of gratitude from you; others are more modest than this. However, they remember the favour, and look upon you in a manner as their debtor. A third sort shall scarce know what they have done. These are much like a vine, which is satisfied by being fruitful in its kind, and bears a bunch of grapes without expecting any thanks for it. A fleet horse or greyhound does not make a noise when they have done well, nor a bee neither when she has made a little honey. And thus a man that has done a kindness never proclaims it, but does another as soon as he can, just like a vine that bears again the next season. Now we should imitate those who are so obliging, as hardly to reflect on their beneficence. But you will say, a man ought not to act without reflection. It is surely natural for one that is generous to be conscious of his generosity; yes, truly, and to desire the person obliged should be sensible of it too. What you say is in a great measure true. But if you mistake my meaning, you will become one of those untoward benefactors I first mentioned; indeed, they too are misled by the plausibility of their reasoning. But if you will view the matter in its true colours, never fear that you will neglect any social act.

A prayer of the Athenians, "Send down, oh! send down rain, dear Zeus, on the ploughed fields and plains of the Athenians." Of a truth, we should not pray at all, or else in this simple and noble fashion.

Æsculapius, as we commonly say, has prescribed such an one riding out, walking in his slippers, or a cold bath. Now, with much the same meaning we may affirm that the nature of the universe has ordered this or that person a disease, loss of limbs or estate, or some such other calamity. For as in the first case, the word "prescribed" signifies a direction for the health of the patient, so in the latter it means an application fit for his constitution and fate. And thus these harsher events may be counted fit for us, as stone properly joined



together in a wall or pyramid is said by the workmen to fit in. Indeed, the whole of nature consists of harmony. For as the world has its form and entireness from that universal matter of which it consists, so the character of fate results from the quality and concurrence of all other causes contained in it. The common people understand this notion very well. Their way of speaking is: "This happened to this man, therefore it was sent him and appointed for him." Let us then comply with our doom, as we do with the prescriptions of Æsculapius. These doses are often unpalatable and rugged, and yet the desire of health makes them go merrily down. Now that which nature esteems profit and convenience, should seem to you like your own health. And, therefore, when anything adverse happens, take it quietly to you; it is for the health of the universe, and the prosperity of Zeus himself. Depend upon it, this had never been sent you, if the universe had not found its advantage in it. Neither does nature act at random, or order anything which is not suitable to those beings under her government. You have two reasons, therefore, to be contented with your condition. *First*, because it has befallen you, and was appointed you from the beginning by the highest and most ancient causes. *Secondly*, The lot even of individuals is in a manner destined for the interest of him that governs the world. It perfects his nature in some measure, and causes and continues his happiness; for it holds in causes, no less than in parts of a whole that if you lop off any part of the continuity and connection, you maim the whole. Now, if you are displeased with your circumstances, you dismember nature, and pull the world in pieces, as much as lies in your power.

Be not uneasy, discouraged, or out of humour, because practice falls short of precept in some particulars. If you happen to be beaten, come on again, and be glad if most of your acts are worthy of human nature. Love that to which you return, and do not go like a schoolboy to his master, with an ill will. No, you must apply to philosophy with inclination, as those who have sore eyes make use of a good receipt. And when you are thus disposed, you will easily acquiesce in reason, and make your abode with her. And here you are



to remember that philosophy will put you upon nothing but what your nature wishes and calls for. But you are crossing the inclinations of your nature. Is not this the most agreeable? And does not pleasure often deceive us under this pretence? Now think a little, and tell me what is there more delightful than greatness of mind, and generosity, simplicity, equanimity, and piety? And once more, what can be more delightful than prudence? than to be furnished with that faculty of knowledge and understanding which keeps a man from making a false step, and helps him to good fortune in all his business?

Things are so much perplexed and in the dark that several great philosophers looked upon them as altogether unintelligible, and that there was no certain test for the discovery of truth. Even the Stoics agree that certainty is very hard to come at; that our assent is worth little, for where is infallibility to be found? However, our ignorance is not so great but that we may discover how transitory and insignificant all things are, and that they may fall into the worst hands. Farther, consider the temper of those you converse with, and you will find the best will hardly do; not to mention that a man has work enough to make himself tolerable to himself. And since we have nothing but darkness and dirt to grasp at, since time and matter, motion and mortals are in perpetual flux; for these reasons, I say, I cannot imagine what there is here worth the minding or being eager about. On the other hand, a man ought to keep up his spirits, for it will not be long before his discharge comes. In the meantime, he must not fret at the delay, but satisfy himself with these two considerations: the one is, that nothing will befall me but what is in accordance with the nature of the universe; the other, that I need do nothing contrary to my mind and divinity, since no one can force me to act thus, or force me to act against my own judgment.

What use do I put my soul to? It is a serviceable question this, and should frequently be put to oneself. How does my ruling part stand affected? And whose soul have I now? That of a child, or a young man, or a feeble woman, or of a tyrant, of cattle or wild beasts.

What sort of good things those are, which are commonly so reckoned on, you may learn from hence. For the purpose, if you reflect upon those qualities which are intrinsically valuable, such as prudence, temperance, justice, and fortitude, you will not find it possible afterwards to give ear to those, for this is not suitable to a good man. But if you have once conceived as good what appears so to the many, you will hear and gladly accept as suitable the saying of the comic writer. Thus we see the generality are struck with the distinction, otherwise they would not dislike the liberty in one case, and allow it in the other, holding it a suitable and witty jest when it is directed against wealth, and the means that further luxury and ambition. Now, what significancy and excellence can there be in these things, to which may be applied the poet's jest, that excess of luxury leaves no room for comfort?

My being consists of matter and form, that is, of soul and body; annihilation will reach neither of them, for they were never produced out of nothing. The consequence is, that every part of me will serve to make something in the world; and this again will change into another part through an infinite succession of change. This constant method of alteration gave me my being, and my father before me, and so on to eternity backward: for I think I may speak thus, even though the world be confined within certain determinate periods.

Reason and the reasoning faculty need no foreign assistance, but are sufficient for their own purposes. They move within themselves, and make directly for the point in view. Wherefore, acts in accordance with them are called right acts, for they lead along the right road.

Those things do not belong to a man which do not belong to him as a man. For they are not included in the idea; they are not required of us men; human nature does not promise them; neither is it perfected by them. Form whence it follows that they can neither constitute the chief end of man, nor strictly contribute towards it. Farther, if these things were any real additions, how comes the contempt of them, and the being easy without them, to be so great a commendation?

tion? To balk an advantage would be folly if these things were truly good. But the case stands otherwise; for we know that self-denial and indifference about these things, and patience when they are taken away, is the character of a good man.

Your manners will depend very much upon the quality of what you really think on; for the soul is as it were tinged with the colour and complexion of thought. Be sure therefore to work in such maxims as these. Wherever a man lives, he may live well; by consequence, a life of virtue and that of a courtier are not inconsistent. Again, that which a thing is made for, is that towards which it is carried, and in that which it is naturally carried to, lies the end of the act. Now where the end of a thing is, there the advantage and improvement of it is certainly lodged. Now the happiness of mankind lies in society, since that we were made for this purpose, I have proved already. For is it not plain that the lower order of beings are made for the higher, and the higher for the service of each other? Now as those with souls are superior to the soulless, so amongst all creatures with souls the rational are the best.

To expect an impossibility is madness. Now it is impossible for ill men not to do ill.

There is nothing happens to any person but what was in his power to go through with. Some people have had very severe trials, and yet either by having less understanding, or more pride than ordinary, have charged bravely through the misfortune, and come off without a scratch. Now it is a disgrace to let ignorance and vanity do more with us than prudence and principle.

Outward objects cannot take hold of the soul, nor force their passage into her, nor set any of her wheels going. No, the impression comes from herself, and it is her own motions which affect her. As for the contingencies of fortune, they are either great or little, according to the opinion she has of her own strength.

When we consider we are bound to be serviceable to mankind, and bear with their faults, we shall perceive there is a common tie of nature and relation between us. But when

we see people grow troublesome and disturb us in our business, here we are to look upon men as indifferent sort of things, no less than sun or wind, or a wild beast. It is true they may hinder me in the executing part, but all this is of no moment while my inclinations and good intent stand firm, for these can act according to the condition and change. For the mind converts and changes every hindrance into help. And thus it is probable I may gain by the opposition, and let the obstacle help me on my road.

Among all things in the universe, direct your worship to the greatest. And which is that? It is that being which manages and governs all the rest. And as you worship the best thing in nature, so you are to pay a proportionate regard to the best thing in yourself, and this is akin to the Deity. The quality of its functions will discover it. It is the reigning power within you, which disposes of your actions and your fortune.

That which does not hurt the city or body politic cannot hurt the citizen. Therefore when you think you are ill-used, let this reflection be your remedy: If the community is not the worse for it, neither am I. But if the community is injured, your business is to show the person concerned his fault, but not to grow passionate about it.

Reflect frequently upon the instability of things, and how very fast the scenes of nature are shifted. Matter is in a perpetual flux. Change is always and everywhere at work; it strikes through causes and effects, and leaves nothing fixed and permanent. And then how very near us stand the two vast gulfs of time, the past and the future, in which all things disappear. Now is not that man a blockhead that lets these momentary things make him proud, or uneasy, or sorrowful, as though they could trouble him for long?

Remember what an atom your person is in respect of the universe, what a minute of immeasurable time falls to your share, and what a small concern you are in the empire of fate!

A man misbehaves himself towards me; what is that to me? The action is his, and the disposition that led him to it is his, and therefore let him look to it. As for me, I am in

the condition the universal nature assigns me, and am doing what my own nature assigns me.

Whether the motions of your body are rugged or agreeable, do not let your ruling and governing principle be concerned with them; confine the impressions to their respective quarters, and let your mind keep her distance, and not mingle with them. It is true, that which results from the laws of the union through the force of sympathy or constitution, must be felt, for nature will have its course. But though the sensation cannot be stopped, it must not be overrated, nor strained to the quality of good or evil.

We ought to live with the gods. This is done by him who always exhibits a soul contented with the appointments of Providence, and obeys the orders of that divinity which is his deputy and ruler, and the offspring of God. Now this divine authority is neither more nor less than that soul and reason which every man possesses.

Are you angry at a rank smell or an ill-scented breath? What good will this anger do you? But you will say, the man has reason, and can, if he takes pains, discover wherein he offends. I wish you joy of your discovery. Well, if you think mankind so full of reason, pray make use of your own. Argue the case with the faulty person, and show him his error. If your advice prevails, he is what you would have him; and then there is no need of being angry.

You may live now if you please, as you would choose to do if you were near dying. But suppose people will not let you, why then, give life the slip, but by no means make a misfortune of it. If the room smokes I leave it, and there is an end, for why should one be concerned at the matter? However, as long as nothing of this kind drives me out, I stay, behave as a free man, and do what I have a mind to; but then I have a mind to nothing but what I am led to by reason and public interest.

The soul of the universe is of a social disposition. For this reason it has made the lower part of the creation for the sake of the higher. And as for those beings of the higher rank, it has bound them to each other. You see how admirably things are ranged and subordinated according to the



dignity of their kind, and cemented together in mutual harmony.

Recollect how you have behaved yourself all along towards the gods, your parents, brothers, wife, and children; towards your instructors, governors, friends, acquaintance, and servants. Whether men can say of you, "He never wronged a man in word or deed." Recollect how much business you have been engaged in, and what you have had strength to endure; that now your task is done, and the history of your life finished. Remember likewise, how many fair sights you have seen, how much of pleasure and pain you have despised, how much glory disregarded, and how often you have done good against evil.

Why should skill and knowledge be disturbed at the censures of ignorance? But who are these knowing and skilful people? Why, those who are acquainted with the original cause and end of all things, with that reason which pervades the mass of matter, which renews the world at certain periods, and which governs it through all the lengths of time.

You will quickly be reduced to ashes and skeleton. And it may be you will have a name left you, and it may be not. And what is a name? Nothing but sound and echo. And then for those things which are so much valued in the world, they are miserably empty and rotten, and insignificant. It is like puppies snarling for a bone; and the contests of little children sometimes transported, and then again all in tears about a plaything. And as for modesty and good faith, truth and justice, they have fled "up to Olympus from the wide-spread earth." And now, what is it that can keep you here? For if the objects of sense are floating and changeable, and the organs misty, and apt to be imposed on; if the soul is but a vapour drawn off the blood, and the applause of little mortals insignificant; if the case stands thus, why not have patience till you are either extinguished or removed? And till that time comes, what is to be done? The answer is easy: to worship the gods, and speak honourably of them; to be beneficial to mankind; to bear with them or avoid them; and lastly, to remember that whatever lies without the compass

of your own flesh and breath is nothing of yours, nor in your power.

You may be always successful if you do but set out well, and let your thoughts and practice proceed upon right method. There are two properties and privileges common to the soul of God and man and all rational beings. The one is, not to be hindered by anything external; the other, to make virtuous intention and action their supreme satisfaction, and not so much as to desire anything farther.

If this accident is no fault of mine, nor a consequence of it; and besides, if the community is never the worse for it, why am I concerned? Now, how is the community injured?

Do not suffer a sudden impression to overbear your judgment. Let those that want your assistance have it as far as the case requires. But if they are injured in matters indifferent, do not consider it any real damage, for that is a bad habit. But as the old man, when he went away, asked back his foster-child's top, remembering that it was a top, so do in this case also. When you are haranguing in the rostra, a little of this to yourself would not be amiss:—Hark you, friend, have you forgotten what this glitter of honour really is? I grant it is but tinsel, but for all that it is extremely valued. And because other people are fools, must you be so too? I can at once become happy anywhere, for he is happy who has found for himself a happy lot. In a word, happiness lies all in the functions of reason, in warrantable desires and virtuous practice.

## BOOK VI

As the substance of the universe is pliable and obedient, so that sovereign reason which gives laws to it has neither motive nor inclination to bring an evil upon anything. It has no evil in its nature, nor does evil, but forms and governs all things, and hurts nothing.

Do but your duty, and do not trouble yourself, whether it is in the cold, or by a good fire, whether you are overwatched, or satisfied with sleep, whether you have a good word or a bad one, whether you are dying, or doing anything else, for this last must be done at one time or other. It is

part of the business of life to leave it, and here too it suffices to manage the present well.

Look thoroughly into matters, and let not the peculiar quality or intrinsic value of anything escape you.

The present appearance of things will quickly undergo a change, and be either exhaled into common matter or dispersed.

That intelligent Being that governs the universe has perfect views of His own nature and acts, and of the matter on which He acts.

The best way of revenge is not to imitate the injury.

Be always doing something serviceable to mankind, and let this constant generosity be your only pleasure, not forgetting in the meantime a due regard to the Deity.

The governing part of the mind arouses and alters itself; gives what air it pleases to its own likeness, and to all the accidents and circumstances without.

The particular effects in the world are all wrought by one intelligent nature. This universal cause has no foreign assistant, no interloping principle, either without or within it.

The world is either a medley of atoms that now intermingle and now are scattered apart, or else it is a unity under the laws of order and providence. If the first, what should I stay for, where nature is in such a chaos, and things are so blindly jumbled together? Why do I care for anything else than to return to the element of earth as soon as may be? Why should I give myself any trouble? Let me do what I will, my elements will be scattered. But if there is a Providence, then I adore the great Governor of the world, and am easy and of good cheer in the prospect of protection.

When you happen to be ruffled a little by any untoward accident, retire immediately into your reason, and do not move out of tune any further than needs must; for the sooner you return to harmony, the more you will get in your own power.

Put the case, you had a step-mother and a mother at the same time; though you would pay a regard to the first, your converse, I conceive, would be mostly with the latter. Let the court and philosophy represent these two relations to

you; apply frequently to this last, and seek your refreshment with her. For it is a life of virtue and philosophy which makes life at court tolerable to you, and you yourself tolerable.

When we have meat before us, or other dishes, we receive the impression that this is but the carcass of a fish, this of a fowl, and the other of a pig. And then for this bottle of Falernian, what is it but a little moisture squeezed out of the berry of a grape? And your purple is nothing but sheep's hair twisted together, and stained in the gore of a little shell-fish. And if we were to proceed to some other satisfactions of sense, we should find them but coarse in their causes and constitution; and as these notions strike through the surface, press into the heart of things, and shew them in their natural colours, so we should carry them on, and apply them to all the pageantry of life. And where things appear most plausible, be sure to bring them to the test, and look at their worthlessness, and strip them of all the words by which they were exalted. Without this care, figure and appearance are great cheats; and when you think your fancy is best employed, you will be the most fooled. Remember what Crates said even of Xenocrates.

The inclination of the generality may be reduced to these heads: Some people are little enough to be attracted by things in the state of bare existence or vegetation, as with stones, wood, figs, grapes, olives, and such like. Others, who are somewhat more reasonable in their fancy, must have life to charm them; and these, it may be, are in love with their flocks and herds. A third sort, better furnished than the former, admire nothing beneath a rational soul, and this not as a whole, but as it were they pride themselves in slaves, possessed of some skill, parts, or industry. But he that values a rational creature that is social and universal runs into none of the follies above mentioned, but makes it his chief business to look to his own soul, and keep it in rational and social movements, and to assist all mankind in the public interest.

Some things are pressing into being, and others are hastening out of it, and that which was entire just now, is part of it spent already. The world is renewed by the change

and flux, no less than the infinite series of ages by the perpetual succession of time. Now, who would set a value upon things hurried thus fast down the stream, on which it is impossible to stop? Such a passion is much like falling in love with a sparrow flying over your head. You have, as it were, but one glimpse of her, and she is out of sight. Life is but a sort of exhalation of the blood, and a little breathing in of air. Now, to inhale and exhale your breath for the support of life, which you do every moment, and expire your last, when you lose the whole power of breathing which you received at your birth yesterday or the day before, is much the same action.

Neither the perspiration of plants, nor the breath of animals, nor the impressions of sensation, nor the puppet-motions of passion are privileges of any great value. To which we may add the instinct of crowding into herds, together with the functions of nutrition, this latter being not unlike a separating of our food. What then is it that you count worth your esteem? Applause? Not at all. Why, then, you must not value the applause of tongues, for the commendation of the multitude is nothing else. Well I find fame and glory will not tempt you; what, then, is there behind worth the having? To govern your motions, and make use of your being according to the intentions of nature. This is the design of arts and improvement in other cases, every artificer and profession endeavoring to make the thing fit to answer the end for which it was intended. This, for instance, is the design of vine-dressers and those that manage horses and dogs. And learning and education have all one object in view. It is agreed then, the main point lies here. Compass but this, and let all things else alone. Must your inclinations always run riot, and will you never become free, self-contained, and passionless? This temper will let loose abundance of uneasy passions upon you. It will make you grow envious, full of jealousy and suspicion, and apt to overreach those who are possessed of something you have a mind to. And when strong desires are unsatisfied, you will find yourself mightily disturbed. And this will make you murmur and grow mutinous against the gods. But if you come



once to pay a due regard and reverence to your own reason, you will be pleased with yourself, serviceable to society, and compliant with the gods. That is, you will be entirely satisfied with their rule and administration.

The elements either press upwards, or fall downwards, or else run round in a circle. But virtue has none of these motions; she is of a nobler kind. Her progress in regular thoughts is somewhat unintelligible, but always prosperous.

What a strange humour there is amongst some people. They do not care to afford a good word to their contemporaries, and yet are very desirous of being praised by posterity, that is, by those they never saw, nor ever will have the least acquaintance with. Now this is almost as absurd as it would be to be disturbed because you were not commended by the generations that lived before you.

Because you find a thing very difficult, do not at once conclude that no man can master it. But whatever you observe proper and practicable by another, believe likewise within your own power.

If an antagonist in the circus tears our flesh with his nails, or tilts against us with his head, and wounds us, we do not cry out foul play, nor are we offended at the rough usage, nor suspect him afterwards as a dangerous person in conversation. It is true, when we are at the exercise we guard and parry, but all this is done without raising ill blood, or looking upon the man as an enemy. Let us act in this way in the other instances of life. When we receive a blow, let us disregard it, thinking we are but at a trial of skill, for, as I said before, it is in our power to retire without feeling malice and ill-will.

If any one can convince me of an error, I shall be very glad to change my opinion, for truth is my business, and nobody was ever yet hurt by it. No; he that continues in ignorance and mistake, it is he that receives the mischief.

I do my duty, that is enough. As for other things, I shall never be disturbed about them. For they are either without life or without reason, or they have lost their way and cannot find it.

As for brute animals, and things undignified with reason,

use them generously and nobly, as beings that have reason should treat those that have none. But treat men, since they have reason, as members of the same society. And in all your affairs invoke the gods for their assistance. As for the time you are to continue this, never trouble yourself whether it is long or short. For three hours of life thus well spent are sufficient.

Alexander the Great and his groom, when dead, were both upon the same level, and ran the same chance of being scattered into atoms or absorbed in the soul of the universe.

What abundance of motions there are in the body, what abundance of thoughts in the mind at the same time! He that considers this will not wonder so much that infinitely more productions, nay rather, all that are, should exist together in that great whole we call the universe.

Suppose you were asked to spell Antoninus's name, would you sound every letter with emphasis in the company's ears? Or would you return their passion if they were angry? I conceive you would rather go mildly to work, and give them the letters and syllables as they stand, without noise. Apply this to greater instances, and remember that all duties in morality have a determinate number of parts to render them complete. These must be observed, and performed in order; but it must be done smoothly, without growing provoked upon meeting with provocation.

You hold it cruel to balk people's fancies, and not give them leave to pursue what they reckon their interest. Yet with this you are chargeable in some measure yourself when you are angry with those that do amiss; for they are carried towards what they esteem their own interest and convenience. But that you will say is their mistake. Then it is your part to lead them out of it, and to show them their error without resentment.

What is death? It is a resting from the vibrations of sensation, and the swayings of desire, a stop upon the rambling of thought, and a release from the drudgery about your body.

It would be a shame if your mind should falter and give in before your body.

Have a care you have not too much of a Cæsar in you, and that you are not died with that dye. This is easily learned, therefore guard against the infection. Be candid, virtuous, sincere, and modestly grave. Let justice and piety have their share in your character; let your temper be remarkable for mildness and affection, and be always enterprising and vigorous in your business. And, in short, strive to be just such a man as virtue and philosophy meant you to be. Worship the gods and protect mankind. This life is short, and all the advantage you can get by it is a pious disposition and unselfish acts. Do everything as a disciple of Antoninus; imitate him in the vigour and constancy of his good conduct, in the equality, sweetness, and piety of his temper, the serenity of his aspect, his contempt of fame, and the generous ambition he had to be perfectly master of his business. Further, it was his way to dismiss nothing till he had looked through it, and viewed it on all sides; to bear unreasonable remonstrances without making a return; never to be in a hurry; to be backward in giving encouragement to informers. He was a great judge of men and manners, but of no reprimanding humour; not at all apt to be frightened; not too suspicious, nor like a sophist. Satisfied with a little, as one might easily perceive by his palace, his furniture, his habit, his eating, and his attendance. His disposition was patient, and fatiguing his delight. He was temperate in his diet. He was firm in his friendship, and steady and agreeable in the manner of showing it. He gave his courtiers all the freedom imaginable to contradict him, and was pleased with the proposal of a better expedient than his own. To conclude, he was a religious prince, but without superstition. Pray imitate these good qualities of his, that you may have the satisfaction of them at your last hour as he had.

Rouse and recollect yourself, and you will perceive your trouble lay only in a scene of imagination. And when you are well awake, look upon these realities as you did upon those visions.

My person consists of soul and a little body. To this latter all things are morally indifferent, the body being in no condition to make a distinction of this kind. And as to my

mind, there is nothing can affect her, her own actions excepted; now these are all within her power, and of all her actions she is only concerned with the present, for what is past or to come, signifies as much as nothing, and is at present indifferent.

As long as the hands and feet do the work they were made for, they move naturally, and with ease. Thus while a man performs the functions of a man, and keeps true to his condition, he feels no more weight than what nature lays upon him. Now that which is not beside the intentions of nature can never be a real misfortune.

What abundance of sensual satisfaction have thieves, paricides, and usurpers been possessed of?

Do not you observe among your artificers, though they bear the contradiction and impertinence of the unskilful, yet they will not comply so far as to be talked out of their knowledge, or work against the rules of their trade? And is it not a scandalous business, that an architect or a physician should have more regard for his profession than a man has for his? For his, I say, in which he has the honour of the gods for his partners.

The vast continents of Europe and Asia are but corners of the creation. The ocean is but a drop, and Mount Athos but a grain in respect of the universe, and the present time but a point to the extent of eternity. These things have all of them petty, changeable, and transitory beings. Remember likewise that all things proceed from the soul of the universe, either by direct or indirect causality. Thus the growling deformity of a lion, the poison of serpents, and whatever seems offensive in nature, as thorns or dirt, are the outcome of something noble and beautiful. Do not therefore suppose them insignificant and unworthy the being you worship, but consider the fountain whence all things spring.

He that has taken a view of the present age, has seen as much as if he had begun with the world, and gone to the end of it; for all things are of one kind and of one form.

The mutual dependence all things have, and the relation they stand in to each other, is worth your frequent observation. For all the parts of matter are in some measure linked

together and interwoven, and for this reason have a natural sympathy for each other. For one thing comes in order after another, and this comes about through their active movement and harmony, and the unity of their substance.

Bring your will to your fate, and suit your mind to your circumstances, and love those people heartily that it is your fortune to be engaged with.

Those tools, vessels, and utensils are said to be right, which serve for the uses they were made, though in this case the artificer that made them is commonly absent. But in the works of nature, the forming power is always present with the effect, and abides there, wherefore this deserves a particular regard. From hence you are to conclude that as long as you behave yourself as this sovereign power directs you, you will live in accordance with intelligence. In this way too all things in the universe are directed by intelligence.

If you suppose anything which lies out of your command to be good or evil, your missing the one or falling into the other will unavoidably make you a malcontent against the gods, and cause you to hate those people whom you either know or suspect to be instrumental in your misfortune. To be plain, our being concerned for these objects often makes us very unreasonable and unjust. But if we confine the notion of good and evil to things in our power, then all the motives to complaint will drop off; then we shall neither remonstrate against Heaven, nor quarrel with any mortal living.

All people work in some measure towards the ends of Providence, some with knowledge and design, though others are not sensible of it. And thus, as I remember, Heraclitus observes, that those who are asleep may be said to help the world forward. In short, the grand design is carried on by different hands and different means. For even he that complaining makes head against his fate, and strives to pull the administration in pieces, even such a testy mortal as this contributes his share abundantly, for the universe had need even of such an one. Consider, then, how you are ranging yourself, and what workers you are joining. For He that governs the world will certainly make you good for something, and



prove serviceable to his scheme, one way or other. Have a care you do not make such a ridiculous figure in nature, as that mean and ridiculous verse did in the play Chrysippus mentions.

The sun never covets the properties of a shower, nor does Æsculapius interfere with the fruit-bearing god. Are not the stars different from each other? And yet their influences work towards the same end.

If the gods have decreed anything concerning me or my business, they have decreed my advantage. For it is absurd to suppose that they are mistaken in their measures, or not benevolent in their design. For to what purpose should they intend me any harm? What would themselves, or the universe, the special object of their providence, gain by it? But granting they have made no particular provision for me, yet since their government of the world is not disputed, the consequence will be much the same. And why, then, should I not be contented with whatever happens as a consequence of the universal whole? To put the case further. Suppose the gods take care of nothing (which, by the way, we must reckon a scandalous opinion), then it will be high time to leave off the common solemnities of sacrificing, prayers and religious swearing, and all those observances which we keep as though the gods were present and dwelling with us. If the gods, therefore, will take care of none of us, it is certainly lawful for me to take care of myself. Now, it is my right to consider my own convenience, and what is that? Why, that is convenient for every one, which suits his nature and his constitution. Now reason and social principles are suited to my nature. Take me, then, under the particular distinction of Antoninus, and Rome is my town and country; but consider me as a man in general, and I belong to the corporation of the world. That, therefore, and only that which is serviceable to both these societies, is an advantage to me.

Whatever happens to particulars, is serviceable to the universe, that thought might satisfy. But we can carry the reasons for acquiescence farther, for upon observation you will perceive that what is profitable to one man, is in some measure for the interest of the rest. And here I take the

word profit in the common meaning of things neither good nor bad.

You may remember that at a play, or such like diversion, the same thing coming over and over again tires the sense, and extinguishes the pleasure. Remove this contemplation into life; for here all things come round, and bring the same causes and appearances along with them. How long, then, will this last?

Consider with yourself that people of all conditions, professions, and countries are dead, if you cast your eyes back as far as Philistion, Phœbus, or Origanion. Now turn towards the other classes of men. And we must take our turn, too, with the rest, and remove to the same place whither so many famous orators and great philosophers, such as Heraclitus, Pythagoras, and Socrates have shown us the way. So many heroes and generals and princes, and besides Eudoxus, Hipparchus, and Archimedes, not to mention a great many other extraordinary geniuses, persons of industry, wit, spirit, and versatility and confidence; they are all gone; even those buffoons, who, like Menippus, mocked at this perishable and transitory existence. Remember they are all in their graves. And where is the harm of all this? nay, what are those the worse for it, that have not so much as left their own names behind them? In a word, there is only one thing here worth the minding, and that is, to be true and just, and to show benevolence, even to the untrue and unjust.

When you have a mind to divert your fancy, consider the good qualities of your acquaintance; as the enterprising vigour of this man, the modesty of another, the liberality of a third, and so on. For there is nothing so entertaining as a lively image of the virtues exhibited in the character of those we converse with, occurring as numerous as possible. Let this, therefore, be always at hand.

You are not angry because you weigh so light in the scale, and do not ride forty stone. Why, then, should you be dissatisfied because your life is not drawn out to an unusual and extraordinary period? You ought to be no more covetous of time than you are of bulk, but be contented with your own allowance.

It is good to try to bring people to a right understanding of the case; but if they are unwilling, be governed by the law of justice. If there comes a force upon you and stops your progress, abandon it and be easy, and make a virtue of necessity. Remember that you undertook the business upon the condition of its being feasible, and never pretended to grasp at impossibilities. What was it, then, you aimed at? Why, to do your best in your effort. Right! And this may be effectually done, though the enterprise should happen to miscarry.

The ambitious person lodges his happiness in the activity of another, the voluptuary in his own affections, but a man of understanding places his good in his own action.

We are at liberty not to misinterpret any accident, and by consequence we may be free from disturbance. Things have no natural power over thoughts to influence our judgment.

Accustom yourself to attend to what is discoursed, and as far as you can get into the soul of him that speaks.

That which is not for the interest of the whole swarm is not for the interest of a single bee.

If the patient rails at the doctor, or the crew at the master of the vessel, whom will they mind, or how can the doctor secure their health, or the master of the vessel a good voyage?

How many people that come into the world with me are gone out of it already?

Honey tastes bitter to the jaundiced, and people bitten by a mad dog are frightened at the sight of water. And on the other hand, a little ball is a beautiful thing to a child. This considered, why should you be angry with any one? Can you imagine that error has less force upon the mind than a little bile or poison upon the body?

As nobody can rob you of the privileges of your nature, or force you to live counter to your reason, so nothing can happen to you but what is consistent with the interest of the universe.

Consider with yourself what sort of people men must court, and for what base objects and by what scandalous ac-

tions. 'And then how time will cover all things, and how many it has covered already.

## BOOK VII

WHAT is wickedness? What you have often seen. When you are in danger of being shocked, consider that the sight is nothing but what you have frequently seen already. Everywhere, up and down, ages and histories, towns and families are full of the same stories. There is nothing new to be met with, but all things are common, and quickly over.

Opinions, whether right or wrong, can never be pulled out of your head, unless the impressions on which they rest are first removed. It is in your power to kindle them afresh, or to form a right judgment upon the present emergency. And why, then, should I be disturbed at it? For nothing that does not enter my mind, and get within me, can hurt me. Hold to this, and you are safe. Come, I will tell you a way how you may live your time over again. Do but recollect, and review what you have seen already, and the work is done.

Gazing after shows, the diversions of the stage, farms well stocked with flocks and herds, contests for victory in the field are all much the same. So, too, a bone thrown to puppies, fishes scrambling for a bait, ants laboriously carrying a grain of wheat, mice frightened out of their wits and running away, puppets danced upon a wire. And in the midst of them a wise man must be good-humoured, and not grow haughty in the contemplation. Remembering, notwithstanding, that the true worth of a man is to be measured by the objects he pursues.

Do not let either discourse or action pass unobserved; attend to the sense and signification of the one, and to the tendency and design of the other.

Is my intellect sufficient for this business or not? If it is, I will make use of my talent as given me by heaven for that purpose. If not, I will either let it alone, and resign it to a better capacity, unless that be contrary to my duty, or else I will do what I can. I will give my advice, and put the executing part into an abler hand, and thus the right moment and

the general interest may be secured. For whatsoever I act, either by myself, or in conjunction with another, I am always to aim at the advantage of the community.

How many famous men are dropped out of history and forgotten? And how many, that promised to keep up other people's names, have lost their own?

Never be ashamed of assistance. Like a soldier at the storming of a town, your business is to maintain your post, and execute your orders. Now suppose you happen to be lame at an assault, and cannot mount the breach upon your own feet, will you not suffer your comrade to help you?

Be not disturbed about the future, for if ever you come to it, you will have the same reason for your guide, which preserves you at present.

All parts of the universe are interwoven and tied together with a sacred bond. And no one thing is foreign or unrelated to another. This general connection gives unity and ornament to the world. For the world, take it altogether, is but one. There is but one sort of matter to make it of; one God that pervades it; and one law to guide it, the common reason of all rational beings; and one truth; if, indeed, beings of the same kind, and endured with the same reason, have one and the same perfection.

Everything material quickly disappears into the universal matter. And everything causal is quickly absorbed into the universal reason. And the memory of everything is quickly overwhelmed by time.

With rational beings action in accordance with nature and reason is the same thing.

Either stand upright upon your own legs, or upon your crutches.

Just as connection creates sympathy in the members of the body, so relation of nature does the same thing among rational beings. For though separate in space, they seem all made to co-operate with each other. This thought will be more intelligible and affecting, if you frequently consider yourself as a member of the rational system. But if you reckon yourself only a part, you do not yet love mankind with all your heart. A generous action does not yet delight you from con-



viction; you do a good office merely for fashion and decency, but not as if it were really a kindness to yourself.

Let accidents happen to such as are liable to the impression, and those that feel misfortune may complain of it, if they please. As for me, let what will come, I can receive no damage by it, unless I think it a calamity; and it is in my power to think it none, if I have a mind to it.

Let people's tongues and actions be what they will, my business is to be good. And make the same speech to myself, that a piece of gold, or an emerald, or purple should. Let people talk and act as they please; I must be an emerald, and I must keep my colour.

Does the mind ever cause herself disturbance? Does she bring fears and passions upon herself? Let any other body try to frighten or trouble her if they can, for of her own conviction she will not turn to such impressions. And as for this small carcass, let it take care not to feel, and if it does, say so. But the soul, the seat of passion and pain, which forms an opinion on these things, need suffer nothing, unless she throws herself into these fancies and fears. For the mind is in her own nature self-sufficient, and must create her wants before she can feel them. This privilege makes her undisturbed and above restraint, unless she teazes and puts fetters upon herself.

Happiness is the possession of a good genius or goodness. Why then does fancy break in and disturb the scene? Begone! by the gods, as you came; I do not want you! However, since you have custom to plead in your excuse, withdraw, and I will forgive you.

Is anyone afraid of change? I would gladly know what can be done without it? and what is dearer and more suitable to the universal nature? Pray, must not your wood be transformed before your bath can be ready for you? Must not your meat be changed to make it fit to nourish you? Indeed, what part of life or convenience can go forward without alteration? Now, in all likelihood a change in your condition may be as serviceable to the world in general, as those alterations above mentioned are to you.

All particular bodies are hurried as through a swift tor-

rent through the universal mass of which they are incorporate, like a sort of serviceable limbs to the world. How many a Chrysippus, Socrates, and Epictetus have sunk in the gulf of time? And the same reflection will hold good concerning any other person or thing whatsoever.

I am only solicitous about one thing, and that is, lest I should do something that the constitution of man does not permit, or in the way or time it does not permit.

It will not be long before you will have forgotten all the world, and in a little time all the world will forget you too.

It is the privilege of human nature to love those that disoblige us. To practise this, you must consider that the offending party is of kin to you, that ignorance is the cause of the misbehaviour, and the fault is involuntary, that you will both of you quickly be in your graves; but especially consider that you have received no harm by the injury, for your mind is never the worse for it.

The universal nature works the universal matter like wax. Now for the purpose, it is a horse; soon after you will have it melted down, and run into the figure of a tree, then a man, then something else. And it is but a little while that it is fixed in one species. Now a trunk feels no more pain by being knocked in pieces than when it was first put together.

A sour gruff look is very unnatural, and to put it on often will make it settle, and destroy the beauty and pleasantness of the aspect to that degree that it is never to be recovered: from whence you may conclude it is a foolish custom. It is high time for those people to die that have outlived the sense of their own misdemeanours.

That being which governs nature will quickly change the present face of it. One thing will be made out of another by frequent revolutions. And thus the world will be always new.

When anyone misbehaves himself towards you, immediately bethink yourself what notions he has concerning advantage and disadvantage. When you have found out this, you will pity him, and neither be angry nor surprised at the matter. It may be upon enquiry you may find your opinions upon these points much the same, and then you ought to pardon

him. But if your notions of good and evil are different, then you will more easily bear with his ignorance.

Do not let your head run upon that which is none of your own, but pick out some of the best of your circumstances, and consider how eagerly you would wish for them, were they not in your possession; but then you must take care to keep your satisfaction within compass, for fear it should carry you too far, make you over-value the object, and be disturbed at the loss of it.

Rely upon yourself, for it is the nature of the principle that rules within us, to be satisfied with honesty, and the inward quiet consequent to it.

Rub out the colours of imagination. Do not suffer your passions to make a puppet of you. Confine your care to the present. Look through that which happens either to yourself or another. Distinguish the parts of your subject, and divide them into the causal and the material element. Think upon your last hour, and do not trouble yourself about other people's faults, but leave them with those that must answer for them.

When you hear a discourse, make your understanding keep pace with it, and reach as far as you can into events and their causes.

Would you set off your person, and recommend yourself? Let it be done by simplicity, by modesty of behaviour, and by indifference to things neither good nor bad. Love mankind and resign to providence. For as the poet observes, "All things are under law," not the elements only, but it suffices to remember that there are at the most but very few things in the world that are not under law.

Concerning death: It is a dispersion if there are atoms; but if the universe is a unity, it is either extinction or change.

As for pain, if it is intolerable it will quickly despatch you. If it stays long it is bearable. Your mind in the meantime preserves herself calm by the strength of the opining faculty, and suffers nothing. And for your limbs that are hurt by the pain, if they can complain, let them do it.

As for fame, consider the intellect of the people that are to commend, how insignificant they are, and how little in their

pursuits and aversions. Consider also that as one heap of sand thrown upon another covers the first, so it happens in life, a new glory soon eclipses an old one.

A saying of Plato, "He that has raised his mind to a due pitch of greatness, that has carried his view through the whole extent of matter and time, do you imagine such an one will think much of human life? Not at all (says the other man in the dialogue). What then? Will the fear of death afflict him? Far from it."<sup>1</sup>

Antisthenes said, "It is a royal thing to be ill spoken of for good deeds."

It is a shame that a man should be master of his countenance, and compose or control it as the mind directs, while that mind is not controlled by itself.

"Ne'er fret at accidents, for things are sullen,  
And don't regard your anger."<sup>2</sup>

"To the immortal gods and us give joy."

"Fate mows down life like corn, this mortal falls;  
The other stands awhile."<sup>3</sup>

"If I and mine are by the gods neglected,  
There's reason for their rigour."

"For the good is with me and the just."<sup>4</sup>

"No joining others in their wailing, no violent emotion."

More of Plato's sentences:—"To such a one I should return this very reasonable answer, Hark ye, friend, your are mightily out if you think a man that is good for anything is either afraid of living or dying. No; his concern is only whether in doing anything he is doing right or wrong—acting the part of a good man or a bad."<sup>5</sup>

Plato again:—"In my opinion, when a man holds a post with his own choice, or has been put into it by his superior, his business is to remain there in the hour of danger, and fear nothing but disgrace and cowardice."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From Plato's Republic.

<sup>2</sup> From Euripides' Bellerophon.

<sup>3</sup> From Euripides' Hypsipyle.

<sup>4</sup> From Aristophanes' Acharnians.

<sup>5</sup> From Plato's Apology.

Plato once more:—"With your favour, sir, it is not always the part of virtue and bravery to preserve either your own life or your neighbour's. He that is a man in good earnest must not be so mean as to whine for life, and grasp intemperately at old age: let him leave this point to Providence. The women can tell him that we must go when our time is come. His duty is to consider how he may make the most of his life, and spend what there is to the best advantage."<sup>1</sup>

Consider the course of the stars as if you were driving through the sky with them. Let the transmutation of the elements be frequently the subject of your meditation. Such contemplations as these scour off the rust contracted by dwelling here below.

It is a fine saying that of Plato's:—"That when we consider the state and condition of mankind, we should place our imagination upon some lofty pyramid, and from thence take a prospect of the world, and look it over as it were at one view. Here we may see flocks, armies, husbandry, marriages and separations, births and deaths, clamours of the law courts, desert places, variety of barbarous people, feasts, lamentations, and markets. Take it altogether, it is a strange medley. And yet you will find the diversity of the parts contributes to the harmony of the whole."<sup>2</sup>

By looking back into history, and considering the fate and revolutions of government, you will be able to draw a guess, and almost prophesy upon the future; for they will certainly be of the same nature, and cannot but be cast in the same mould. So that forty years of human life may serve for a sample of ten thousand. For what more will you see?

"What's sprung from earth dissolves to earth again,  
And heaven-born things fly to their native seats."<sup>3</sup>

That is, there is a loosing of the entanglements of the atoms, and a scattering abroad of the insensible elements.

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<sup>1</sup> From Plato's *Gorgias*.

<sup>2</sup> This does not appear to be in any of Plato's extant writings. It has been suggested that it should rather be referred to Pythagoras.

<sup>3</sup> From Euripides' *Chrysippus*.



“With food, and drinks, and cunning magic arts,  
Turning the channel’s course to ’scape from death.”<sup>1</sup>  
“The breeze which heaven has sent  
We must endure, and toil without complaint.”

Can another man ride or fence better than you? It may be so. Let nobody outdo you in social and modest behaviour. Let nobody be more resigned to fate and forgiving to his neighbours.

As long as a man can make use of that reason which he shares with the gods and man, he need not question the event. There can be no grounds to suspect misfortune, provided you stick close to nature and act in accordance with your condition.

It is always and everywhere in your power to resign to the gods, to be just to mankind, and to examine every impression with such care that nothing may enter that is not well examined.

Never make any rambling enquiries after other people’s thoughts, but look directly at the mark which nature has set you. Nature, I say, either that of the universe or your own; the first leads you to submission to Providence, the latter to act as becomes you. Now that which is suitable to the frame and constitution of things is what becomes them. To be more particular, the rest of the world is designed for the service of rational beings in consequence of this general appointment, by which the lower order of things are made for the use of the more noble. And rational creatures are designed for the advantage of each other. Now a social temper is that which human nature was principally intended for; the next thing designed in our being is to be proof against corporeal impressions; it being the peculiar privilege of reason to move within herself, and not suffer sensation or passion to break in upon her; for these are both of animal and inferior quality. But the understanding part claims a right to govern, and will not bend to matter and appetite; and good reason for it, since she was born to command and make use of them. The third main

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<sup>1</sup> From Euripides’ *Supplikes*.

requisite in a rational being is to secure the assent from rashness and mistake. Let your mind but compass these points, and stick to them, and then she is mistress of everything which belongs to her.

We ought to spend the remainder of our life according to nature, as if we were already dead, and had come to the end of our term.

Let your fate be your only inclination, for there is nothing more reasonable.

When any accident happens, call to mind those who have formerly been under the same circumstances, how full of surprise, complaint, and trouble they were about the matter. And where are they now? They are gone, their murmuring could not make them immortal. To what purpose should you imitate their behaviour. Cannot you leave these foreign emotions to those who cause them, and those who are moved by them? Your business is only to consider how you may give a turn of advantage to the emergency. Now you can make good use of them, and they will supply excellent material, if you will but take care, and do nothing but what is warrantable. Always remembering, that whether you use it ill or well, the thing wherewith action is concerned, is in both cases indifferent.

Look inwards, for you have a lasting fountain of happiness at home that will always bubble up if you will but dig for it.

Take care that your motions and gestures may be grave and composed, for the same air of sense and decency which the mind can put into the face ought to be visible through the whole body, but then all this must be done without the least affection.

The art of living resembles wrestling more than dancing, for here a man does not know his movement and his measures beforehand. No, he is obliged to stand strong against chance, and secure himself as occasion shall offer.

Consider what sort of people are they that must commend you, and how are their understandings furnished. Truly, if you do but consider the source of their opinions and pas-

sions, you will pity their ignorant misbehaviour, and not care a rush for their approbation.

It is a saying of Plato's, that no soul misses truth of her own good-will. The same may be said with reference to justice, sobriety, good-nature, and the like. Be particularly careful to remember this, for it will help to sweeten your temper towards all men.

When you lie under any corporeal affliction, let this thought be at hand to relieve you: that there is no disgrace in pain, that the sovereign part of your mind is never the worse for it. For how can she suffer unless her material or her social nature be impaired? Besides, Epicurus's maxim will help to support you under most pains; for as he observes, they will neither be intolerable nor everlasting. But then you must keep in mind the limits set to them, and not run into the common opinion about them. And here you must remember that there are many more sensations than we are aware of, which belong to the nature of pain, such as drowsiness, excessive heat, want of appetite. Now, when you find yourself fret and grow disturbed at these things, take notice that pain has got the better of you.

Do not return the temper of ill-natured people upon themselves, nor treat them as they do the rest of mankind.

Which way are we to conclude that Socrates was a better man in virtue and temper than Telauges? To make out this, it is not enough to say that he disputed better with the sophists and died more bravely; that he passed the night in the cold with more endurance, and that when he was bidden to arrest Leon of Salamis, he held it nobler to refuse;<sup>1</sup> that he walked with a swaggering air in the streets,<sup>2</sup> though the truth of this last particular may be questioned. To prove the point, we must

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<sup>1</sup> In the year 404 B.C., during the terrible tyranny of "the Thirty" at Athens, Socrates was ordered to assist in unjustly arresting a rich citizen of Salamis, and bringing him to Athens for a trial that was only a mockery of justice. Socrates refused to do this; and he alludes to this in the *Apology*.

<sup>2</sup> This is asserted by Aristophanes in his comedy, the *Clouds*, where he ridicules Socrates.

examine what sort of soul Socrates carried about with him. Could he be contented with the conscience of an honest and a pious man? Did he abstain from fretting and fuming to no purpose at the knavery and wickedness of the age? Was he governed by nobody's ignorance? Did he never question the equity of Providence, grow surprised at his hard fortune, and sink under the weight of it, and not dip his soul too deep in his senses?

Nature has not wrought your composition so close that you cannot withdraw within your own limits, and do your own business yourself; for a man may be first-rate in virtue and true value, and yet be very obscure at the same time. You may likewise observe that happiness has very few wants. Granting your talent will not reach very far into logic, this cannot hinder the freedom of your mind, nor deprive you of the blessings of sobriety, beneficence, and resignation.

You may live with all the freedom and satisfaction imaginable, though the whole world should cry you down; nay, though wild beasts should tear this flesh with which you are enveloped. For pray, how can anything of this reach up to your mind and ruffle her serenity? How can it prevent your passing a right judgment upon your circumstances, and making the best use of them? And thus your reason may address the object of terror: "Look you! nature has made you one thing, and common mistake another." And use may address what befalls, "It is you I was seeking." For it is my way to make everything serve as an opportunity for rational or social virtue in a performance of some duty either to God or man. For since all that happens is related to God or man, there is nothing new in it or difficult to deal with, but all is familiar and easy.

He that is come to the top of wisdom and practice, spends every day as if it were his last, and is never guilty of over-excitement, sluggishness, or insincerity.

Though the gods are immortal, and have their patience tried through so many ages, yet they are not angry, because for so long a time they will have to put up with such base and wretched mortals, but even provide liberally for them. And are you, that are just going off the stage, sick of the company?

are you tired with evil men already, and yet one of those unhappy mortals yourself?

It is great folly not to part with your own faults which is possible, but to try instead to escape from other people's faults, which is impossible.

Whatever business tends neither to the improvement of your reason, nor the benefit of society, the rational and social faculty thinks beneath it.

When you have done a kindness, and your neighbour is the better for it, why need you be so foolish as to look any farther, and gape for reputation and requital?

Nobody is ever tired of advantages. Now to act in conformity to the laws of nature is certainly an advantage. Do not you therefore grow weary of doing good offices, whereby you receive the advantage.

There was a time when the universal nature moved towards making the world. So that now all events must either be consequences of the first creation, or else even the chief things at which the universal ruling principle aims are without design. Now this thought will go a great way towards making a man easy.

## BOOK VIII

To keep you modest and free from vain glory, remember that it is no longer in your power to spend your life wholly, from youth upwards, in the pursuit of wisdom. Your friends and yourself, too, are sufficiently acquainted how much you fall short of philosophy; you have been liable to disturbance, so that the bare report of being a philosopher is no longer an easy matter for you to compass; you are unqualified by your station. However, since you know how to come at the thing, never be concerned about missing the credit. Be satisfied, therefore, and for the rest of your life let your own rational nature direct you. Mind, then, what she desires, and let nothing foreign disturb you. You are very sensible how much you have rambled after happiness, and failed. Neither learning, nor wealth, nor fame, nor pleasure could ever help you to it. Which way is it to be had then? By acting up to the height of human nature. And how shall



a man do this? Why, by getting a right set of principles for impulses and actions. And what principles are those? Such as state and distinguish good and evil. Such as give us to understand that there is nothing properly good for a man but what promotes the virtues of justice, temperance, fortitude, and independence, nor anything bad for him, but that which carries him off to the contrary vices.

At every action ask yourself this question, What will the consequence of this be to me? Am I not likely to repent of it? I shall be dead in a little time, and then all is over with me. If the present undertaking is but suitable to an intelligent and sociable being, and one that has the honour to live by the same rule and reason with God himself; if the case stands thus, all is well, and to what purpose should you look any farther?

Alexander, Julius Cæsar, and Pompey, what were they in comparison of Diogenes, Heraclitus, and Socrates? These philosophers looked through things and their causes, and their ruling principles were in accordance. But as for those great princes, what a load of cares were they pestered with, and to how many things were they slaves!

People will play the same pranks over and over again, though you should burst.

In the first place, keep yourself easy, for all things are governed by the universal nature. Besides, you will quickly go the way of all flesh, as Augustus and Hadrian have done before you. Farther, examine the matter to the bottom, and remember that your business is to be a good man. Therefore, whatever the dignity of human nature requires of you, set about it at once, without "ifs" or "ands"; and speak always according to your conscience, but let it be done in the terms of good nature and modesty and sincerity.

It is the work of Providence to change the face of things, and remove them from one place to another. All conditions are subject to revolution, so that you need not be afraid of anything new, for all things are usual, and are equally distributed.

Every being is at ease when its powers move regularly and without interruption. Now a rational being is in this prosperous condition when its judgment is gained by nothing but

truth and evidence, when its designs are all meant for the advantage of society, when its desires and aversions are confined to objects within its power, when it rests satisfied with the distributions of the universal nature of which it is a part, just as much as a leaf belongs to the nature of the tree that bears it. Only with this difference, that a leaf is part of a nature without sense or reason, and liable to be checked in its operations, whereas a man is a limb as it were of an intelligent, righteous, and irresistible being, that is all wisdom, and assigns matter and form, time, force, and fortune, to everything in one measure and proportion. And this you will easily perceive if you do not compare one thing with another in every detail, but compare the whole of one thing with the whole of another.

You have no leisure to read books, what then? You have leisure to check your insolence. It is in your power to be superior to pleasure and pain, to be deaf to the charms of ambition. It is in your power not only to forbear being angry with people for their folly and ingratitude, but over and above, to cherish their interest, and take care of them.

Never again let any man hear you censure a court life, nor seem dissatisfied with your own.

Repentance is a reproof of a man's conscience for the neglect of some advantages. Now, whatever is morally good is profitable, and ought to be the concern of a man of probity. But no good man would ever be inwardly troubled for the omission of any pleasure, whence it follows that pleasure is neither profitable nor good.

What is this thing considered in itself? Of what sort of substance, of what material and causal parts does it consist? What share of action has it in the world? and how long is it likely to stay there?

When you find yourself sleepy in a morning, remember that business and doing service to the world is to act up to nature and live like a man. Whereas sleep you have in common with the beasts. Now those actions which fall in with a man's nature are more suitable and serviceable, yes, and more pleasant than others.

Upon every new impression let it be your constant cus-

tom to examine the object in the light of physics, ethics, and dialectics.

When you are about to converse with any person, make this short speech to yourself: What notions has this man about good and evil? Then if he has such opinions concerning pleasure and pain, and the causes of them, reputation or ignominy, life or death; if the case stands thus with him, I shall not wonder at his practice, and I shall remember that it is next to impossible he should do otherwise.

Would it not be an odd instance of surprise to stare at a fig-tree for bearing figs? Why then should it seem strange to us for the world to act like itself, and produce things pursuant to quality and kind? This is just as foolish as it would be for a physician to wonder at a fever, or a master of a vessel at a cross blast of wind.

To retract or mend a fault at the admonition of a friend in no way hurts your liberty, for it is still your own activity which by means of your own impulse and judgment, and by your own mind, makes you see your mistake.

Why do you do this, if it is in your power to let it alone? But if you cannot help it, whom do you blame? The atoms or the gods? Either is folly, and therefore we must murmur against nothing. If you can mend the cause, set about it. If not, mend the thing itself. If you cannot do even that, what are you the better for grumbling? Now a man should never do anything to no purpose.

Whatever drops out of life is somewhere, for the world loses nothing. If it stays here, it also changes here, and is dissolved into its proper parts, which are elements of the universe and of yourself. And these two change and do not complain.

Everything is made for some end. The sun even will say, I have my business assigned, and so too the celestial deities. But pray, what were you made for? For your pleasure? Common sense will not bear such an answer.

Nature pre-ordains the end of everything, no less than its beginning and continuance, as does he that strikes a ball, and what is the ball the better all this while for mounting, or the worse for flying lower, and coming to the ground? What

does a bubble get in the swelling or lose in the breaking? The same may be said of a candle.

Turn your body the wrong side outwards, and see it as it is, and consider what age and disease will make of you, and consider that both the orator and the hero, the praiser and the praised, will quickly be out of sight, and that we live but in a corner of this little dimension, that men differ in their notions of honour and esteem, and that even the same person is not of the same opinion long together, and, moreover, that the earth is but a point.

Mind that which lies before you, whether it be thought, word, or action. You are well enough served for choosing rather to become good to-morrow than be good to-day.

Am I about anything? I will do it with regard to the interest of mankind. Does anything happen to me? I receive it, referring it to the gods, and the fountain of all things whence springs all that happens.

Think a little, and tell me what you meet with in the business of bathing? There is oil and sweat, and dirtiness and water, but an offensive mixture, take it altogether. Why, life and everything in it is made up of such indifferent stuff.

Lucilla buried Verus, and followed him soon after. Secunda did the same office for Maximus, and survived but a little while. And thus it fared with Epitynchanus and Diotimus, with Antoninus and Faustina, with Celer and the Emperor Hadrianus; they assisted at one funeral, and quickly made another themselves. Where are those men of wit, force, and knowledge, and the others puffed up with pride? They made a great noise and figure formerly, but what is become of them now? Where are those sharp-witted philosophers, Charrax, Eudæmon, Demetrius the Platonist, and others of their learning? Alas! they took but a turn in the world, and are gone long since. Some of them have sunk at once, and left no memory behind them. The history of others is overcast, and dwindled into fables, and a third sort have dropped even out of fables. Your business is therefore to remember, that after death this compound of yours will fall to pieces; or else your soul will either be extinguished or removed into another station.



Satisfaction consists in doing the things we were made for. And how is this to be compassed? By the practice of general kindness, by neglecting the movements of our senses, by distinguishing appearance from truth, and by contemplating the nature of the universe and its works.

Every man has three relations to acquit himself in: his body that encompasses him makes one, the Divine cause that gives all men all things another, and his neighbours a third.

If pain is an affliction, it must affect either the body or the mind; if the body is hurt, let it say so; as for the soul, it is in her power to preserve her serenity and calm by supposing the accident no evil; for judgment and impulse, aversion and desire, are lodged within, and there no mischief can come at them.

Rub out the impressions of fancy on the mind by continually saying to yourself, It is in my power to make my soul free from desire or disturbance. I am likewise able to distinguish the quality of things, and make use of them accordingly. These are all privileges of nature, and ought to be remembered as such.

When you speak in the senate or elsewhere, speak suitably and without affectation, and let your discourse be always clear.

Augustus' court is buried long since; his empress and daughter, his grand-children and ancestors, his sister and Agrippa, his relations and domestics, physicians and sacrifices, his favourites, such as Arius the philosopher, and Mæcenas, they are all gone. Go on from single persons to families, that of the Pompeys, for instance, and you will find the whole line extinct. "This man was the last of his house," is not uncommon upon a monument. How solicitous were the ancestors of such people about an heir; and yet some one must of necessity be the last. Here, too, consider the death of a whole race.

Guide your life towards a single course of action and if every action goes its due length, as far as may be, rest contented. Now, no mortal can hinder you from putting your affairs in this condition. But may not some obstacle from without interpose? No; not so far as to prevent your acting



like a man of probity, moderation, and prudence. But perhaps my activity may be checked in some other way. It is no matter for that. As long as you are easy under the obstruction, and pass on smoothly to whatever offers, you have at once another opportunity for action, in accordance with this aforesaid government.

As to the case of good fortune, take it without pride, and resign it without reluctance.

If you have observed a hand or a foot cut off, and removed from the body, just such a thing is that man, as far as lies in his power, who is discontented with fate, and breaks off from the interest of mankind, or who by a selfish act has cut himself off from the union of nature, for by nature he is a part of the whole. But here lies the good luck of the case. It is in your power to set the limb on again. This favour is allowed by God to no other part of the creation that what is separated and cut off should be joined on again. Consider, then, the particular bounty of God to man in this privilege. He has set him above the necessity of breaking off from nature and Providence at all; but supposing he has broken away, it is in his power to rejoin the body, and grow together again, and recover the advantage of being the same member he was at first.

Whence come all the powers and prerogatives of rational beings? From the soul of the universe. Amongst other faculties, they have this which I am going to mention. For as the universal nature overrules all mutinous accidents, brings them under the laws of fate, and makes them part of itself, so it is the power of man to make something out of every hindrance, and turn it to his own advantage.

Do not take your whole life into your head at a time, nor burden yourself with the weight of the future, nor form an image of all probable misfortunes. This method will but confound you. On the contrary, your way is upon every emergency to put this question to yourself, "What intolerable circumstance is there in all this?" For you will be ashamed to assign particulars, and confess yourself conquered. Besides, you are to remember, that neither what is past nor what is to come need afflict you, for you have only to deal with the pres-

ent. Now, this is strangely lessened, if you take it singly and by itself. Chide your fancy, therefore, if it offers to shrink for a moment and grow faint under so slender a trial.

Do Panthea and Pergamus still wait at the tomb of Verus, or Chabrias and Diotimus at that of Hadrian? That would be absurd indeed! And what if they were there, would those princes be sensible of the service? Granting they were, what satisfaction would it be to them? And suppose they were pleased, would these waiters be immortal? Are they not doomed to age and death with the rest of mankind? And when they are dead, what would the royal ghosts do for want of their attendance? Alas! all this ceremony must end at last in stench and dust.

If you are so quick at discerning, says one, discern and judge wisely.

I find no mortal virtue which contradicts and combats justice; this cannot be affirmed of pleasure, for here temperance comes in with a restraint.

It is opinion which gives being to misfortune, do not fancy yourself hurt, and nothing can touch you. But what is this "you?" It is your reason. But I am not all reason. Very well, but do not let reason grow uneasy. And if any other part of you is in trouble, let it keep its concerns to itself.

To be checked in the functions of sense, and motion, and desire is an evil to the animal life; that which hinders the growth or flourishing of a vegetable may be said to be an evil there, so likewise to be cramped in the faculties of the mind is an evil to an intelligent nature. Apply all this to yourself. Does pleasure or pain attack you? Turn them over to your senses, and let them answer for it. Does anything cross your undertaking? Why, if you are positive and peremptory about it, the disappointment is really an evil to your rational nature. But if you consider the usual course of things, then no manner of hindrance or harm has happened to you; indeed, no mortal can put a restraint upon the soul; and neither fire nor sword, slander, tongue, nor tyrant can touch her; just as a sphere when it has once come into being remains a sphere.

Why should I vex myself that never willingly vexed anybody?

Every man has his particular inclination, but my pleasure lies in a sound understanding, a temper that never falls out either with men or accidents, that sees and takes all things with good humour, and puts them to the uses they are fit for.

Make the best of your time while you have it. Those who are so solicitous about fame never consider that future generations will be much the same as the present whom they are vexed with, and they, too, are mortal; what then can the noise or opinions of such little mortals signify to you?

Toss me into what climate or state you please, for all that, I will keep my divine content, if it can but exist, and act in accordance with its nature. What! is this misadventure big enough to ruffle my mind and make it deteriorate? To make it mean, craving, and servile, and frightened; what is there that can justify such disorders?

No accident can happen to any man but what is consequent to his nature. And the same thing may be affirmed of a beast, a vine, or a stone. Now if things fare no otherwise than according to kind and constitution, why should you complain? You may be assured the universal nature has never laid upon you an intolerable evil.

If anything external vexes you, take notice that it is not the thing which disturbs you, but your notion about it, which notion you may dismiss at once if you please. But if the condition of your mind displease you, who should hinder you from rectifying your opinion? Farther, if you are disturbed because you are not active in the discharge of your duty, your way is rather to do something than to grieve at your own omission. But you are under some insuperable difficulty; then never vex yourself about the matter, for you have nothing to answer for. It may be you will say: It is not worth my while to live unless this business can be effected. Why then, even die; but take your leave contentedly, go off smoothly as if you were in full activity, and be not angry with those that disappointed you.

The mind is invincible when she turns to herself, and relies upon her own courage; in this case there is no forcing her will, though she has nothing but obstinacy for her defence. What then must her strength be when she is fortified with

reason, and engages upon thought and deliberation? A soul unembarrassed with passion is a very citadel, the most impregnable security for man in future; hither we may retire and defy our enemies. He that has not seen this advantage must be ignorant, and he that neglects to use it unhappy.

Do not make more of things than your senses report. For instance, you are told that such an one has spoken ill of you. Right; but that you are really the worse for it is no part of the news. Again, I see my child lie sick. True; but that he is in danger is more than I see. Thus always stop at the first representation, and add nothing yourself from within, and you are safe. Or rather, reason upon it like a man that has looked through the world, and is no stranger to anything that can happen.

Does your cucumber taste bitter? Let it alone. Are there brambles in your way? Avoid them then. Thus far you are well. But, then, do not ask what does the world with such things as this, for a natural philosopher would laugh at you. This expostulation is just as wise as it would be to find fault with a carpenter for having saw-dust, or a tailor shreds in his shop. Yet they have places where to bestow these. But universal nature has no place for refuse out of herself; but the wondrous part of her art is that though she is circumscribed, yet everything within her that seems to grow old and moulder and be good for nothing, she melts down into herself and recoins in another figure, and thus she neither wants any foreign substance or by-place to throw the dross in, but is always abundantly furnished with room, and matter, and art within herself.

Be not heavy in business nor disturbed in conversation, nor rambling in your thoughts. Keep your mind from running adrift, from sudden surprise and transports, and do not over-set yourself with too much employment. Do men curse you? Do they threaten to kill and quarter you? How can this prevent you from keeping your mind pure, wise, temperate, and just? It is much as if a man that stands by a pure and lovely spring should fall a-raïling at it; the water never ceases bubbling up for all that; and if you should throw in dirt or clay, it would quickly disappear and disperse, and the fountain will



not be polluted. Which way now are you to go to work, to keep your springs always running, that they may never stagnate into a pool? I will tell you: you must always preserve in yourself the virtues of freedom, of sincerity, sobriety, and good nature.

He that is unacquainted with the nature of the world, must be at a loss to know where he is. And he that cannot tell the ends he was made for, is ignorant both of himself and the world too. And he that is uninstructed in either of these two points, will never be able to know the design of his being. What do you think then of his discretion, that is anxious about what is said of him, and values either the praise or the censure of those folks that know neither where they are, nor who?

What! Are you so ambitious of a man's good word, that curses himself thrice every hour? Are you so fond of being in their favour, that cannot keep in their own? And how can they be said to please themselves, who repent of almost everything they do?

Let your soul work in harmony with the universal intelligence, as your breath does with the air. This correspondence is very practicable, for the intelligent power lies as open and pervious to your mind, as the air you breathe does to your lungs, if you can but draw it in.

Wickedness generally does no harm to the universe, so too in particular subjects, it does no harm to any one. It is only a plague to him in whose power it lies to be rid of it whenever he pleases.

My will is as much my own as my constitution; and no more concerned in the will of another man, than my breath and body is in another man's. For though we are born for the service of each other, yet our liberty is independent. Otherwise my neighbour's fault might be my misfortune. But God has prevented this consequence, lest it should be in another's power to make me unhappy.

The sun is diffused, and bestows itself everywhere, but this seeming expense never exhausts it. The reason is, because it is stretched like a thread, and thus its beams have their name from extension. As for the properties and philosophy of a ray, you may observe them, if you like to let it



into a dark room through a narrow passage. Here you will see it move in a straight line, till it is broken, and, as it were, divided, by having its progress stopped by a solid body; and here the light makes a stand, without dropping or sliding off. Thus you should let your sense shine out and diffuse, extended<sup>1</sup> but not exhausted; and when you meet with opposition, never strike violently against it, nor yet drop your talent in despair. But let your beams be fixed, and enlighten where they find a capacity. And as for that body that will not transmit the light, it will but darken itself by its resistance.

He that dreads death is either afraid that his senses will be extinguished or altered. Now, if you have no faculties, you will have no feeling. But if you have new perceptions, you will be another creature, and will not cease to live.

Men are born to be serviceable to one another, therefore either reform the world or bear with it.

Understanding does not always drive onward like an arrow. The mind sometimes by making a halt, and going round for advice, moves straight on none the less, and hits the mark.

Look nicely into the thoughts of every one, and give them the same freedom as your own.

## BOOK IX

INJUSTICE is no less than high treason against heaven. For since the nature of the universe has made rational creatures for mutual service and support, but never to do anybody any harm, since the case stands thus: he that crosses upon this design is profane, and outrages the most ancient Deity; so, too, does the liar outrage the same Deity. For the nature of the universe is the cause of all that exists. Thus all things are one family united, and, as it were, of kin to each other. This nature is also styled truth, as being the basis of first principles and certainty. He, therefore, that tells a lie knowingly, is an irreligious wretch, for by deceiving his neighbour

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<sup>1</sup> He derives the Greek word for rays, *aktines*, from the verb *ekteinesthai*, "to be extended." This, of course, is bad etymology.

he is unjust to him. And he that is guilty of an untruth out of ignorance is liable to the same charge, because he dissents from the nature of the whole, brings disorder into the world, and opposes the nature of the universe. Yes, and he opposes himself too, who is borne to what is at variance with truth. By neglecting the impulses he was born to, he has lost the test of truth, and the distinction of right and wrong. Further, he that reckons prosperity and pleasure among things really good, pain and hardship amongst things really evil, can be no pious person; for such a man will be sure to complain of the administrations of Providence, and charge it with mismatching fortune and merit. He will often see evil people furnished with materials for pleasure, and regaled with the relish of it, and good men harassed and depressed, and meeting with nothing but misfortune. Now, he that is afraid of pain will be afraid of something that will always be in the world; but this is a failure in reverence and respect. On the other hand, he that is violent in the pursuit of pleasure, will not hesitate to turn villain for the purchase. And is not this plainly an ungodly act? To set the matter right, where the allowance of God is equally clear, as it is with regard to prosperity and adversity (for had He not approved both these conditions, He would never have made them both), I say, where the good liking of heaven is equally clear, ours ought to be so too, because we ought to follow the guidance of nature and the sense of the Deity. That man, therefore, that does not comply with Providence in the same indifference with respect to pleasure and pain, life and death, honour and infamy, he that does not this without struggling of passions, without unmanageable preference or aversion, is no friend to the Divine government.

By saying that universal nature or God stands equally affected to these different dispensations, the meaning is that they are both comprehended in the general scheme, and equally consequent to the first establishment. They were decreed by Providence from the beginning, and struck out with the lines of the creation. Then it was that the plan of Providence was drawn, and the fate of futurity determined. Then nature was made prolific, and enabled to bring forth in due time.

Then the whole stock of beings, the revolutions of fortune, and the successions of time, were all stated and were set going.

He is better bred and more a gentleman, that takes leave of the world without a blot on his scutcheon, and has nothing of falsehood and dissimulation, of luxury or pride, to tarnish his character. But when a man is once dipt in these vices, the next best thing is for him to quit life. Have you determined to abide with vice, and has not even experience yet taught you to fly from the plague? For the destruction of the understanding is a far worse plague than the corruption and change of the air that surrounds us; for the brute only suffers in the first case, but the man in the other.

Do not despise death, but accept it willingly; look upon it as part of the product of nature, and one of those things which providence has been pleased to order. For such as are youth and age, growth and manhood, down and gray hairs, pregnancy and birth, and all natural actions, and incidents of life, so also is dying. A wise man, therefore, must neither run giddily nor impatiently and contemptuously into his grave. He must look upon death as nature's business, and wait her leisure as he does for the progress and maturity of other things; for as you wait for a child to come into the world when it is ready, so you should stay in the other case till things are ripe, and your soul drops out of the husk of her own accord. But if you stand in need of a vulgar remedy to soothe the mind, consider, then, what sort of world and what sort of customs you will be rid of! It is true you are not to fall foul upon mankind, but to treat them with kindness and gentleness. But still you may remember that you will not be leaving men just of your own mind and fancy. Such a unanimity amongst mortals might reasonably recommend life, and make us loth to part with it. But you perceive that vast disturbances are bred by different opinions; insomuch that now we ought rather to petition death to make haste, for fear we too should forget our true selves.

He that commits a fault abroad is a trespasser at home; and he that injures his neighbour, hurts himself, for to make himself an evil man is a great mischief.

Omissions no less than commissions are oftentimes part of injustice.

If your judgment pronounces rightly, if your actions are friendly and well meant, if your mind is resigned to all that proceeds from the external cause at this moment; if you are in possession of these blessings, you are happy enough.

Do not be imposed on by appearances; check your impulses, and moderate your desire, and keep your reason always in her own power.

The souls of brutes are all of one kind, and so are those of rational beings, though of a rational kind. And thus all living creatures that have occasion for air, and earth, and light, are furnished with the same kind, all that have the faculty of vision and life.

Things of the same common quality have a tendency to their kind. Earthy bodies fall to the ground. One drop of moisture runs after another; and thus air, where it is predominant, presses after air, and nothing but force and violence can keep these things asunder. Fire, likewise, mounts upwards on account of its own element, fire, but it has such a disposition to propagate its species and join every other fire here below, that it catches easily upon all fuel a little more dry than ordinary, because in such the qualities opposite to ignition are weak and disabled. Thus all beings which partake of the same common intelligent nature have a natural instinct for correspondence with their own kind; only with this difference, that the higher anything stands in the scale of being, the more it is inclined to communication with its own order. To illustrate the argument, we find the force of nature very active amongst brute animals, as appears by their running together in herds and swarms according to kind; by their providing for their young ones, and by that resemblance of love which is carried on among them. These animals have a soul in them, by consequence their principle of union is more vigorous than in plants, stones, and wood. To go on to reasonable creatures, we may observe them united by public counsels and commonwealths, by particular friendships and families, and in times of war they have truces and treaties. Farther, to instance a higher order, the stars, though not



neighbours in situation, move by concert. Thus where things are more noble and nature rises, sympathy rises too, and operates even among distant objects. But now see what happens. The rational creatures are the only beings which have now forgotten this mutual desire and inclination, and here alone this flowing together is not seen. But though they run from their kind, they are brought back again in some measure. For great is the power of nature, and you shall sooner see a piece of earth refuse to lie by its own element, than find any man so perfectly unsociable as not to correspond with somebody or other.

God and men and the world all of them bear fruit in their proper seasons. It is true, use has restrained this signification to vines and trees; but this custom apart, reason may properly enough be said to bear fruit for itself and for the common good, especially if we consider that the fruit of the understanding keeps close to its kind and resembles the stock.

Give an injurious person good advice, and reform him if you can. If not, remember that your good temper was given you for this trial; that the gods too are so patient as even to pass by the perverseness of such persons, and sometimes to assist them over and above in their health, fame, and fortune; so benign are they. Just thus may you do if you please; if not, where is the impediment?

Do not drudge like a galley slave, nor do business in such a laborious manner as if you had a mind to be pitied or wondered at; but desire one thing only, to move or halt as social reason shall direct you.

To-day I rushed clear out of all misfortune, or rather I threw misfortune from me; for to speak truth, it was not outside, nor ever any farther off than my own fancy.

All things are the same over again, and nothing but what has been known to experience. They are momentary in their lasting, and coarse in their matter, and all things are now as they were in the times of those we have buried.

Things stand without doors and keep their distance, and neither know nor report any things about themselves. What is it, then, that pronounces upon them? Nothing but your own ruling principle.



As the good and evil of a rational, social animal consist in action and not in feeling, so it is not what they feel but what they do, which makes mankind either happy or miserable.

It is all one to a stone whether it is thrown upwards or downwards; it is no harm for it to descend, or good for it to mount.

Examine into men's understandings, and you will see what sort of judges even of themselves are those whom you fear.

All things are in a perpetual flux and a sort of consumption; you yourself are continually changing, and in a manner destroyed, and the whole world keeps you company.

Let everybody's fault lie at his own door.

The intermission of action, and a stop in appetite and opinion, and even a kind of death upon the faculties, is no harm. Go on now to the different periods of life, and here you will find infancy, youth, manhood, and old age, and one, as it were, the death of another. And where lies the terror of all this? Proceed to your life in your grandfather's time, and to that in your father's and mother's, and run over as much ground in differences, changes, and decay as you please, and ask yourself what grievance there is in this, and you may conclude that ending and cessation and alteration of your whole life will be no worse.

Hasten to examine your own ruling principle, and that of the universe, and that of your neighbour. Your own, that you may keep it honest; that of the universe, that you may know what you are part of; your neighbour's, that you may discover whether he acts through ignorance or with knowledge; and here you should likewise remember that you are of kin to him.

As you are a member of society yourself, so every action of yours should tend to the benefit and improvement of it. So that when you do anything which has neither immediate nor remote reference to general advantage, you make a breach in your life, destroy its unity, and are as really guilty of seditious behaviour as a malcontent in an assembly, as far as in him lies, disturbs the general harmony.

Children's anger, mere baubles, wretched souls, bearing

up dead bodies, so that the picture of the underworld makes a more vivid impression.

Penetrate the quality of forms, and take a view of them, abstracted from their matter; and when you have done this, compute the common period of their duration.

You have been a great sufferer for not being contented with your guiding principle, when it does what it was made for. But enough!

When people treat you ill, blame your conduct, or report anything to your disadvantage, enter into the very soul of them; examine their understandings, and see of what nature they are. You will be fully convinced that the opinion of such mortals is not worth one troublesome thought. However, you must be kind to them, for nature has made them your relations. Besides, the gods give them all sort of countenance, warn them by dreams and prophecy, and help them to those things they have a mind to.

The periodic movements of the universe are the same up and down from age to age. This uncertain world is always rolling, and turning things topsy-turvy. Now the soul of the universe either pursues its course towards each particular, in which case accept what it brings with it; or else it only moved to create at first, and all things followed one another by necessary consequence. But if neither of these hypotheses will satisfy, you must set Epicurus's atoms at the helm. In a word, if God governs, all is well; but if things are left to themselves, and set adrift, do not you float at random with them. We shall quickly be all underground; and ere long the earth itself must be changed into something else, and that something into another form, and so on to infinity. Now he that considers these everlasting alterations, this constant tossing and tumbling, and how fast revolutions succeed each other, he will have but a mean opinion of what the world can afford.

The universal cause runs rapid like a torrent, and sweeps all things along. What wretched statesmen are those counterfeits in virtue and philosophy! Mere empty froth! Hark you, friend! let honesty be served first. Do what nature requires of you. Fall on, then, as occasion offers, and never

look about for commendation. However, I would not have you expect Plato's Republic.<sup>1</sup> As the world goes, a moderate reformation is a great point, and therefore rest contented; for who can change men's opinions! And yet unless you can change their opinions, their subjection will be all force and dissembling. Come now! tell me of Alexander, Philip, and Demetrius of Phalerum. Men shall see whether they had a right notion of the laws of nature, and whether they educated themselves. If they acted like tragedy heroes, no one has condemned me to imitate them. Philosophy is a modest and simple profession, do not entice me to insolence and pride.

Fly your fancy into the clouds, and from this imaginary height take a view of mortals here below. What countless herds of men and countless solemnities! What infinite variety of voyages in storm and calm! What differences in the things that become, exist with us, and perish! Go on with the speculation, stretch your thoughts over different aspects of the past and the future, and the present among barbarous nations; how many are there that never heard your name, how many that will quickly forget you, and how many that admire you now will censure you afterwards? In short, memory and fame, and all those things which are commonly so much valued, are of no account at all.

Keep a calm spirit towards things that proceed from an external cause, and a just spirit towards those that proceed from a cause within you; that is, let your impulse and action aim at the interest of mankind, for then you know your faculties are in the right posture that nature has set them.

The greater part of your trouble lies in your fancy, and therefore you may free yourself from it when you please. I will tell you which way you may move more freely, and give yourself elbow-room. Take the whole world into your contemplation, and consider its eternal duration, and the swift change of every single thing in it. Consider how near the end of all things lie to their beginning! But then the ages

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<sup>1</sup> In this work a picture is given of a perfect State.

before our birth and after our death are both infinite and immeasurable.

Whatever you see now will quickly decay and disappear, and those that gaze upon the ruins of time will be buried under them. And then the longest and the shortest liver will be both in the same condition.

If you would look within people, and discover the objects they aim at, and their motives for liking and respect, you must strip them to the soul if you can. When they fancy that by commending or censuring they do you a good or an ill turn, what a strange conceit it is!

Loss is nothing else than change. Things are changed this way, it is true, but they do not perish. Providence, by which all things are well contrived, delights in these alterations. It has always been so in the world, and always will be. What then? Will you say that all things were made ill by so many gods, and must they always remain ill and lack order? And is nature indeed condemned to an everlasting misfortune?

The materials of bodies, if you examine them, are strangely coarse; those that are animated have little in them but water, and dust, and bones, and something that is offensive. And again, marble is no more than a callous excrescence of the earth, nor gold and silver any better than its dregs and sediment. Fine clothes are nothing but hair twisted together. Purple is but the blood of a little fish. And thus I might proceed farther. And as for spirits, they are somewhat of kin to the rest, and are chased from one figure to another.

Come! you have had enough of life, and grumbling, and apishness; what makes you disturbed? What can you be surprised at? What has happened to you worse than you had reason to expect? Does cause or matter make you uneasy? Look into them, and you may probably be relieved. Now for your comfort, besides these two natures, there is no other. It is high time therefore to become simple and behave better towards the gods. Three years' time to peruse these things is as good as a hundred.



If such a man has done amiss, the mischief is to himself; and it may be, if you inquire, he has not done it.

Either all things proceed from one intelligent source, who makes the world but one whole; and if so, why should a part or single member complain of that which is designed for the benefit of the whole? Or else we are under the misrule of atoms, and confusion, and dispersion. Why then do you trouble yourself. Say to your ruling faculty, "You have passed through death and corruption, and forms of animals; and even now you are playing a part, herding and feeding with the rest."

Either the gods have power to assist us, or they have not. If they have not, what does praying to them help you? If they have, why do you not rather pray that they would remove your fears and moderate your desires, and rather keep you from grieving for any of these things, than keep away one thing and grant another? For if the gods can help us, no doubt they can help us to be wiser. But it may be you will say, they have put this in my power. Why, then, do you not make use of your talent, and act like a man of spirit, and not run cringing and creeping after that which is out of your reach? But then who told you that the gods do not assist us in things which we might possibly compass by ourselves? Begin, then, to pray for such things, and you will see. For instance, this man prays that he may gain such a woman, but do you rather pray that you may have no such inclination. Another invokes the gods to set him free from some trouble; but let it be your petition that your mind may never put you upon such a wish. A third is very devout to prevent the loss of his son; but I would have you pray rather against the fear of losing him. Let this be the rule for your devotions, and see if the event does not answer.

"When I was sick," says Epicurus, "I did not discourse to my visitors about my diseases, or the torment I was troubled with. No, my system of natural philosophy was part of my subject; and my main concern was, that my mind, although it partakes in these disturbances of the body, should remain calm, and maintain its own good. I gave no handle to the doctors to brag of their profession and what they did



for me, but held on with fortitude and indifference.” And when you are sick, or under any other disadvantage, cannot you behave yourself as he did? It is practicable to all persuasions in philosophy to stand their ground against all accidents, and not to join in all the foolish talk of the ignorant, who are unacquainted with nature. We must always be prepared, mind the thing at present before us, and the tools, too, with which we are to work.

When you are shocked by any man’s impudence, put this question to yourself: “Is it possible for such impudent people not to be in the world?” No, indeed. Why, then, do you demand an impossibility? For this ill-behaved fellow is one of those necessary rascals that the world cannot dispense with. This reflection will furnish you with patience for a knave, a faithless person, or any other evil body. For when you consider that there is no living without such men, you will treat them better individually; and to fortify you further, consider what an antidote nature has given you against this disease. For supposing you have to do with a troublesome blockhead, you have meekness and temper given you for your guard, and so with the rest. It is likewise in your power to inform the man better, and set him right; for everyone that does an ill action is really out of his way, and misses his mark, though he may not know it. Besides, what harm have you received? If you examine the case, you will find none of these provoking mortals have done your mind any damage. Now that is the place in which what is evil and harmful to you originates. Pray, where is the wonder if an ignorant fellow acts ignorantly? If you expected other things from him, you are much to blame. Your reason might make you conclude that he would misbehave in this way, and yet, when that which was most likely has happened, you seem surprised at it. But especially if you accuse any man of ingratitude and infidelity, the fault is your own, if you believed that a man of this disposition would keep faith, or else in conferring a favour you did not give absolutely, for otherwise you would have been satisfied with a generous action, and made virtue her own reward. You have obliged a man, it is very well. What would you have more? You have acted according to

your own nature, and must you still have a reward over and above? This is just as if an eye or a foot should demand a salary for their service, and not see or move without something for their pains. For as these organs are contrived for particular functions, in performing which they pursue their nature and attain their perfection, so man is made to be kind and oblige. And, therefore, when he does a good office, and proves serviceable to the world, he has fulfilled the end of his being, and attains his own reward.

## BOOK X

O MY soul, are you ever to be rightly good, simple, and uniform, unmasked, and made more visible to yourself than the body that hangs about you? Are you ever likely to relish good nature and general kindness as you ought? Will you ever be fully satisfied, get above want and wishing, and never desire to seek your pleasure in anything foreign, either living or inanimate? Not desiring, I say, either time for longer enjoyment nor place for elbow-room, nor climate for good air, nor the music of good company? Can you be contented with your present condition, and be pleased with all that is about you, and be persuaded that you are fully furnished, that all things are well with you; for the gods are at the head of the administration, and they will approve of nothing but what is for the best, and tends to the security and advantage of that good, righteous, beautiful, and perfect being which generates and supports and surrounds all things, and embraces those things which decay, that other resembling beings may be made out of them? In a word, are you ever likely to be so happily qualified as to converse with the gods and men in such a manner as neither to complain of them nor be condemned by them?

Examine what your nature requires, so far as you have no other law to govern you. And when you have looked into her inclinations never balk them, unless your animal nature is likely to be worse for it. Then you are to examine what your animal nature demands; and here you may indulge your appetite as far as you please, provided your rational nature does

not suffer by the liberty. Now, your rational nature admits of nothing but what is serviceable to the rest of mankind. Keep to these rules, and you will regard nothing else.

Whatever happens, either you have strength to bear it, or you have not. If you have, exert your nature, and never murmur at the matter. But if the weight is too heavy for you, do not complain; it will crush you, and then destroy itself. And here you are to remember that to think a thing tolerable and endurable is the way to make it so if you do but press it strongly on the grounds of interest or duty.

Is anyone mistaken? Undeceive him civilly, and show him his oversight. But if you cannot convince him, blame yourself, or not even yourself.

Whatever happens to you was pre-ordained your lot from the first; and that chain of causes which constitutes fate, tied your person and the event together from all eternity.

Whether atoms or nature rule the world I lay it down in the first place, that I am part of that whole which is all under nature's government. Secondly, I am in some measure related to those beings which are of my own order and species. These points being agreed, I shall apply them. Insomuch then as I am a part of the universe, I shall never be displeased with the general appointment; for that can never be prejudicial to the part which is serviceable to the whole, since the universe contains nothing but what is serviceable to it. For the nature of no being is an enemy to itself. But the world has this advantage above other particular beings, that there is no foreign power to force it to produce anything hurtful to itself. Since, therefore, I am a member of so magnificent a body, I shall freely acquiesce in whatever happens to me. Farther, inasmuch as I have a particular relation to my own species, I will never do anything against the common interest. On the other hand, I shall make it my business to oblige mankind, direct my whole life for the advantage of the public, and avoid the contrary. And by holding to this conduct, I must be happy, as that citizen must needs be who is always working for the benefit of his fellow-citizens, and perfectly satisfied with that interest and station the government assigns him.

All the parts of the whole that lie within the compass of the universe must of necessity corrupt and decay ; by corruption I mean only alteration. Now if this be an evil and a necessary one, by consequence the whole of nature must be in a bad condition, by having the parts so slenderly put together, and so very liable to destruction. And if the case stands thus, nature must either design unkindness to the parts of her own body, by making them subject to unavoidable evil in doing or receiving, or else have these things come about without her knowledge. But both these suppositions are highly improbable. Now if any man has a mind to drop the term Nature, and affirm that these things are naturally produced, he that affirms this does but expose himself, by granting in the first place that the parts of the universe are made for alteration, and then wondering and complaining, as if such accidents were unnatural and extraordinary, especially since things do but return whence they came, and are dissolved into their first principles. For either the elements are scattered at large, or else that which is solid turns to earth, and the particles of air join their own element ; and thus they are received into the rational substance of the universe, which will either be destroyed by fire after a certain period, or else be renewed by perpetual vicissitudes. Now I would not have you think that those particles of earth or air which you have now in your constitution are the same with those you brought into the world with you. The matter which now belongs to you is as it were but of yesterday's growth or of the day before, and you have taken it all in by food, or the air you breathe, and therefore the alterations in your body do not rob you of the flesh and blood you had from your mother, but only of some later additions. But suppose the same body you were born with is so closely connected with that other, this is no objection to the former statement.

When you have given yourself the title of a man of goodness and modesty, of truth and prudence, of resignation and magnanimity, take care that your practice answers to your character, and if any of these glorious names are lost in your mismanagement, recover them as soon as you can : remembering withal, that prudence implies consideration, care, and dis-



criminating enquiry; that to be resigned signifies a cheerful compliance with the allotments of universal nature; that magnanimity imports a superiority of the reasoning part to the pleasure and pain of the body to glory and death, and all those things which people are either fond or afraid of. Now if you can deserve the honour of these names, do not desire them from other folks; you will be quite another man, and will enter into a new life, and indeed it is high time to begin; for to desire to go on at this rate, to be polluted with appetite, and harassed with passion any longer, is a senseless and a scandalous wish. It resembles the meanness of those poor wretches in the amphitheatre, who when they are half devoured, and have nothing but wounds left them, beg notwithstanding to be respited till the morrow; though they know they will only be thrown again to the same claws and teeth that tore them before. Work into the soul of you these few names of credit, and if you find you can abide by them, stand your ground, and think yourself transported to the fortunate islands. But if you perceive that you are overmatched, and begin to give way, retire cheerfully into some quiet nook, where you may manage better. And if this will not do, you may give life the slip, but do this without anger. Walk simply, gravely, and freely into the other world, and thus the last action of your life will be the only one worth the owning. And to remember those good qualities above mentioned the more effectually, you should remember the gods, and that they had much rather that all rational natures should resemble than flatter them, that trees are distinguished by their fruit, dogs and bees by the qualities proper to their kind, and men too by the appellation of mankind.

Plays, warfare, terror, torpor, servility, will daily wear away these holy principles of yours, which in your study of nature you hastily conceive and let go again. Upon all occasions you should look and act in such a manner as to omit neither the perfect performance of business nor the activity of thinking, to be modest in the consciousness of your improvement, but not so far as to undervalue your knowledge, and keep it out of sight. When will you relish simplicity? when gravity? When will you be able to understand every-



thing, to pronounce upon its nature and its place in the universe; to calculate its continuance, and the ingredients which it is made up of, who are likely to be affected by it, and what powers they are which can both give it and take it away?

A spider when it has caught a fly thinks it has done some great deed, and so does a sportsman when he has run down a hare, and a fisherman too when he has caught a sprat in a net. Some others must kill boars or bears before they can grow conceited; and a fourth sort value themselves upon hunting Sarmatians; though it may be in this last case, if you go to the definition of robbing, the one are as much thieves as the other.

Observe the steps, and continually study the history of nature, and trace the progress of bodies from one form and species to another; contemplate often upon this subject, for there is nothing contributes so much to greatness of mind. He that is rightly affected with this speculation has in a manner laid his body aside. He considers that this world will quickly be over with him, that he must take his leave of mankind and everything here. In consequence of these thoughts, he is all justice in his acts, and resignation in all else. And as for what people will say or think of him, or practise against him, he never minds it. He has but two points to secure—that is, to be honest in what he now does, and contented with what he now receives. As for other projects and fancies, he has done with them. His business is only to follow that straight path which law has chalked out for him, for in so doing he has the Deity for his guide.

Why need you be anxious about the event when you may examine the enterprise, and debate the reasonableness of it? If you find it practicable, go on contented, and let nothing divert you. But if you cannot see your way, make a halt, and take the best advice upon the case. And if you happen to be stopped by some new emergency, make the most of what is in your power with due consideration, and always stick to what appears just; for after all, that is the best thing to get. For though the grand design may not succeed, yet your failure arose from attempting this. The man who fol-

lows reason in all things is calm, and yet easily moved, cheerful, and yet grave.

When you are first awake you may put this question: whether another man's virtue will signify anything to you in doing your business? No, it will signify nothing. And do not forget what sort of men those are which value themselves so much upon the good or ill character they give their neighbours. How scandalously do they live? How are they overgrown with luxury and vice? How foolish are their fancies, and how unreasonable their fears? See how they steal and rob, not with hands and feet, but with their most valuable part, which, if a man pleases, can produce fidelity, modesty, truth, law, happiness.

He that is truly disciplined and reverent will address nature in this language: "Give me what you please, and take what you please away." And there is not the least tincture of vanity in this, but it proceeds wholly from obedience and satisfaction with her.

Your time is almost over, therefore live as if you were on a mountain. Place signifies nothing, if you live everywhere in the world as in a social community. Never run into a hole, and shun company. No. Let the world see and recognise in you an honest man who lives according to nature; and if they do not like him, let them kill him, for it is much better he were served so, than to live as they do.

Spend no more time in stating the qualifications of a man of virtue, but endeavour to get them.

Take the whole bulk of matter and all the extent of time frequently into your thoughts. And then consider that all particular bodies are but a grain in the proportion of substance, and are but the turning a gimlet in respect of time.

Examine all things closely, and you will find them already decaying and changing, and, as it were, rotting or dispersing, or else things are made as it were to be unmade again.

Consider what an humble figure people make when they are eating or sleeping. But then when they put on lordly airs, and strut about, or grow angry, and abuse their inferiors from an altitude! And yet how many little masters did they

lately cringe to, how mean was their salary, and what a sorry condition will they come to in a short time?

That is best for every man which universal nature sends him; and the time of sending too is also a circumstance of advantage.

The earth, as the poet has it, loves the refreshment of a shower, and the lofty ether loves the earth. And the world loves to execute the decrees of fate; and therefore, say I to the universe, your inclinations and mine shall always be the same. And do we not often say: This loves to be produced?

Either you will take the benefit of custom, and continue to live, or you cut yourself off from the world; and this, too, was your wish; or you cease to live, then death will give you your discharge. One of these cases must happen, therefore be not discouraged.

Take it for a rule that this piece of land is like any other, and that all things here are the same as on the tops of a mountain, or by the sea-shore, or where you will. In this case, as Plato observes,<sup>1</sup> the walls of a town and the inclosure of a sheepfold may be much the same thing.

How does my guiding principle stand affected? To what condition am I now bringing it, and to what uses do I put it? Does thought run low with me? Am I grown selfish, and broken loose from the general interest? Is my soul as it were melted and mingled with the body, and perfectly governed by it?

He that runs away from his master is a fugitive; now the law is every man's master, and therefore he that transgresses it is a deserter. And all those that are dissatisfied, angry, and uneasy, desire that something past, present, or future should not be, of that which was appointed by the ruler of all, which is justice, and which gives every one his due, and break through the orders of Providence. Thus he who is dissatisfied, or angry, or uneasy, is a deserter.

A man deposits seed in a womb, and then another cause takes it and works on it, and makes a child. What a thing

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<sup>1</sup> In Theætetus.

from such a material! Again the child passes food down its throat, and again another cause takes it, and makes perception and motion, life and strength, and other things, both many and strange! Observe then the things that are thus produced in darkness, and recognise the power just as we perceive the power which carries things upwards and downwards, not with the eyes, but no less plainly.

You will do well to remember that the world is just as it was formerly, and will go on at the same rate. If you either dip into history, or recollect your own experience, you will perceive the scenes of life strangely uniform, and nothing but the old plays revived. Take a view of the courts of Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, of Philip, of Alexander, or Cræsus, and you will find the entertainment the same, only the actors are different.

He that struggles with his fortune, and makes an affliction of it, is much like a pig that kicks and cries out when his throat is cutting; and he that, when he is sick, mourns to himself over the bonds in which we are held, is not much better. We should consider that none but rational creatures have the privilege of making necessity a choice; merely to submit is what all are compelled to do.

Consider the satisfactions of life singly, and examine them as they come up, and then ask yourself if death is so terrible in taking them from you.

When anybody's misbehaviour disturbs you, immediately turn to yourself and bethink you whether you have not been guilty of the same fault; for instance, whether you have not over-valued money, or pleasure, or fame, or the like. Such reflections will quickly make you forget your anger, especially if you consider that the offender was not altogether his own man, but under some untoward compulsion. For what else could he do? Therefore, if you can, step in to the rescue and free him from the compulsion.

When you consider Satyrion the Socratic, think upon Eutyches or Hymen; and when you remember Euphrates, think upon Eutychion or Sylvanus; and when Alciphron comes into your head, carry your thoughts to Tropæophrous; and



when you are musing upon Xenophon, let Crito<sup>1</sup> or Severus come into the contemplation; and when you make yourself the subject of your meditations, bring some of the emperors, your predecessors, into your company; and thus set the dead and the living of the same character and profession always one against another; then ask the question: Where are those men? The answer will be: They are nowhere, or at least nowhere that I know of. Thus you will be strongly convinced that men are but smoke and bubbles; and this impression will go the deeper if you consider that what is once perished and sunk will never come up again throughout the ages. As for your share of time, it is but a moment in comparison. Why then cannot you manage that little well and be satisfied? What a noble opportunity of improvement do you run away from? For what are all the revolutions of nature, and the accidents of life, but trials of skill and exercises of reason that has looked through the causes of things carefully and philosophically. Go on then till you have digested all this and conquered the difficulty, for I would have you be like a strong stomach, that masters all sort of diet, and makes nourishment of it; or if you please, like a fire well kindled, which catches at everything you throw in, and turns it into flame and brightness.

Put it out of the power of any one truly to report you not to be a sincere or a good man; let your practice give him the lie; this is all very feasible, for pray who can hinder you from being just and sincere? To make all sure, you should resolve to live no longer than you can live honestly; for, in earnest, reason would rather you were nothing than a knave.

What is it that is most proper to be said or done upon the present occasion? Let it be what it will, I am sure it is in your power to perform it, and therefore never pretend it impracticable. You will never leave grumbling till you can practise virtue with a relish, and make it your pleasure to perform those acts that are suited to the constitution of a human being; for a man ought to hold it a pleasure to do everything

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<sup>1</sup> Crito was a friend of Socrates, and Plato used his name as a title of one of his dialogues.



that is suitable to his nature, and that is in his power. Now this is in his power everywhere. The motion of a cylinder may be stopped, fire and water may be checked in their tendency, and so may any part of the vegetable and animal world. In this case a great many obstructions may interpose, but there is nothing can block up a soul, stop the course of reason, or hinder a thought from running in its natural channel as it pleases. He that considers the irresistible liberty of the mind, that she moves as easily as fire does upwards, as a stone downwards, as a cylinder on a smooth descent, seeks nothing farther; for all other impediments proceed either from the body, which is really a corpse, or else they are founded in opinion, and unless we betray ourselves, and desert our reason, can do us no manner of mischief; otherwise, ill fortune, as it is commonly called, would make a man ill, for all other productions of nature or art, when any harm happens to them, are certainly the worse for it, but here a man is, so to speak, the better for what he suffers; he improves his value and raises his character by making a right use of a rugged accident. In short, I would have you remember, that no citizen can receive any damage by that which does not affect the community, neither can the community suffer unless the laws suffer too; but these misfortunes, as they are called, do not violate the laws, therefore they do not hurt the community, nor by consequence the citizen.

He that is well tintured with philosophy needs but a short receipt, a common cordial will keep up such a man's spirits and expel fear from his heart. For instance—

“As leaves on trees the race of man is found,  
Now green in youth, now withering on the ground.”

So your children are but leaves. Leaves, too, are the echoes of praise, and censure, and silent blame, and reproach. Leaves, too, are the continuance of fame. All these matters, like leaves, have their spring for growing, then a puff of wind sends them packing, and quickly after the wood is new furnished again. Things are strangely short-lived, and yet you fear and pursue them as if all were everlasting, but for all

that, you will soon close your eyes, and then he that is your chief mourner will quickly want another for himself.

An eye that is strong and rightly disposed is indifferent to all colours, therefore if it calls for green, it is a sign it is weak and out of order. Thus when the hearing and smelling are in good condition, they do not pick and choose their objects, but take in all manner of scents and sounds. Thus a strong stomach despatches all that comes into it, like a mill that grinds all sorts of grain. And thus a mind that is sound and healthy is prepared to digest all sorts of accidents, and therefore when it is clamorous in such wishes as these: "O that my children may live and flourish, that I may be commended for everything I do!" when the mind, I say, is thus sickly, it is just like an eye that is all for green colours, and like a set of teeth that would touch nothing by their good will but soft things.

There is nobody so happy in his family and friends, but that some of them when they see him going will rejoice at his death. Let him be a person of probity and prudence, somebody or other will drop some of these sentences over his grave. "Well! our man of order and gravity is gone, we shall now be no more troubled with his discipline! I cannot say he was ill-natured to any of us, but for all that, I am sensible he condemned us in his heart." This is the best treatment a good man must expect. But alas! as for our conduct, how many reasons will people muster up to be rid of us! If you consider this when you are dying, you will quit life with the less reluctance. Say then to yourself, "I am leaving an odd sort of world, where the sharers in my fortune, and the objects of my care and kindness, those people for whom I have drudged and contrived, and wished so heartily, count my life no better than a grievance, and would fain be rid of me; now who would be fond of staying in such company any longer?" However, this thought must not go so deep as to sour your humour. You must keep your temper, and part friendly with every body, but then your good nature must not make you hang back. For as when a man has an easy death, the soul slides gently out of the body, so you must walk off handsomely, and bid the world adieu without

regret. It is true, nature has twisted your interests, and tied you together, but now she loosens the knot, and makes the sign to disengage. I will part then with the world as with my friends and relations, but for all my kindness I will not be dragged from them but go of my free will. For this too is ordained by nature.

Let it be your constant method to look into the design of people's actions, and see what they would be at, as often as it is practicable; and to make this custom the more significant, practise it first upon yourself.

Remember that what pulls and hales you from one passion to another, is but your fancy within you. There lies the rhetoric that persuades you. That is the living thing, and to speak plainly, that is the man, after all. But when you talk of a man, I would not have you tack flesh and blood to the notion, nor those limbs neither which are made out of it. These are but tools for the soul to work with. Now the only difference is that nature has glued them as it were to the soul, but the use of them depends solely upon the mind. It is the will that either checks or sets them going. They have but the force of instruments, and signify no more without foreign direction, than a shuttle, a pen, or a whip, which will neither weave, nor write, nor lash the horses, without somebody to manage them.

## BOOK XI

THE properties of a rational soul are these. She has the privilege to look into her own nature, to cut her qualities and form herself to what character she pleases. She enjoys her product (whereas trees and cattle bring plenty for other folks). Whether life proves long or short, she gains the ends of living. Her business is never spoilt by interruption, as it happens in a dance or a play. In every part and in spite of every interruption, her acts are always finished and entire; so that she may say: I carry off all that belongs to me. Farther, she ranges through the whole world, views its figure, looks into the vacuum on the outside of it, and strains her sight on to an immeasurable length of time. She contemplates the grand revolutions of nature, and the destruction

and renewal of the universe at certain periods. She considers that there will be nothing new for posterity to gaze at; and that our ancestors stood upon the same level for observation; in so much that in forty years' time a tolerable genius for sense and enquiry may acquaint himself with all that is past and all that is to come by reason of the uniformity of all things. Lastly, it is the property of a rational soul to love her neighbours, to be remarkable for truth and sobriety, to prefer nothing to her own dignity and authority, which has likewise the custom and prerogative of a law; and thus far right reason and rational justice are the same.

The way to despise the pleasure of a fine song, a well-performed dance, or the athletic exercise, is as follows: as for the song, take the music to pieces and examine the notes by themselves, and ask as you go along, "Is it this or this single sound, that has subdued me?" You will be ashamed to confess the conquest. Thus, to lessen the diversion of dancing, consider every movement and gesture apart; and this method will hold with respect to athletic contests. In short, all things but virtue and virtuous acts abate by taking them asunder, and, therefore, apply the expedient to all other parts of your life.

What a brave soul is that that is always prepared to leave the body and unconcerned about her being either extinguished, scattered, or removed—prepared, I say, upon judgment, and not out of mere obstinacy like the Christians—but with a solemn air of gravity and consideration, and in a way to persuade another and without tragic show.

Have I obliged anybody, or done the world any service? If so, the action has rewarded me. This answer will encourage good nature, therefore let it always be at hand.

What may your trade or profession be? It is to live like a man of virtue and probity. And how can this end be compassed, but by the contemplation of the nature of the world and of mankind in particular.

As to dramatic performances, tragedy appeared first. The design of them was to show that the misfortunes of life were customary and common, and that what attracted them upon the stage, might surprise them the less when they met with it









on the larger stage of the world. Thus people see that these events must happen, and that even those who cry out, "O Cithæron,"<sup>1</sup> cannot stand clear of them. And to give the stage-poets their due, they have some serviceable passages, as, for instance,

"If I and mine are by the gods neglected,  
There's reason for their rigour."

Again—

"Ne'er fret at accidents, for things are sullen,  
And don't regard your anger;"

Once more—

"Fate mows down life like corn, this mortal falls,  
Another stands a while."

And others like them. Next to tragedy, old comedy took a turn upon the stage; and here pride and ambition were lashed and pointed at with great freedom and authority, and not without some success; and for this reason, Diogenes sometimes borrowed from them. You are now to observe that middle comedy succeeded to the old, and the new to the middle, this last kind sinking by degrees to the buffoonery of the mimi. It is true, there are some useful expressions to be met with even here; but then you are to consider the tendency of the whole poetic art, and whether these dramatic diversions drive at any aim.

Nothing is clearer to me than that the present state of your life is as good for philosophy and improvement as any other whatsoever.

A bough by being lopped off from another, must of necessity be lopped from the whole tree; thus a man that breaks with another loses the benefit of the whole community. It is true a bough is lopped off by a foreign hand, but the man pulls himself asunder by his untoward aversion and hatred

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<sup>1</sup> A cry of the chorus in Sophocles' *Œdipus Tyrannus* when *Œdipus* as an infant is exposed on Mount Cithæron in order to avoid the terrible doom prophesied against him.

to his neighbour. He little thinks how he disincorporates himself by this unhappy division from the body of mankind! And here the goodness of God who founded this society is extraordinary. He has put it in our power to grow to the limb we left, and come again into the advantage of the main body. But if this misfortune is often repeated, it will be a hard matter to restore the part and close the division. For, as gardeners observe, a bough cut off and grafted in again is not in the same good condition with another which always flourished upon the trunk. We should be one in growth, though not in sympathy.

People's malice or impertinence cannot beat you off your reason, or stop your progress in virtue. Be not then disconcerted, nor check your good nature towards them. If you meet with opposition and ill-will, you must neither be diverted nor disturbed, but keep your right judgment and action and your temper too towards people who try to hinder you or otherwise annoy you. For as it is a weakness to give in from fear and be diverted from your conduct, so it is likewise to be angry with impertinent people. They are both a sort of deserters from Providence, who are either frightened from their duty, or fall out with those of their own nature and family.

Nature falls short of art in no instance, art being but an imitation of nature; and if so, the most perfect and all-embracing nature cannot be supposed to work with less skill than a common artificer. Now, in all arts the less in value are contrived for the sake of the greater. This, therefore, is the method of universal nature, and upon this ground justice is founded. The other virtues are but acts of justice differently applied. But just we can never be if we are eager and anxious about external advantages, if we are apt to be led astray and grow over-hasty, and inconstant in our motion.

Aversions and desires are the general occasions of disturbance. Now since the objects of these passions do not press upon you, but it is you that make up to them in some measure, you should let your opinion about them lie still, and they too will keep still, and then you will neither be seen pursuing nor avoiding them any longer.

The figure of the soul is then round and uniform, when she neither reaches after anything foreign, nor shrinks into herself, nor is dispersed or sunk in, but shines in the light by which she surveys the truth of all things and of herself too.

Does anyone despise me? It is his look-out. I will take care not to give him any reason for his contempt by my words and acts. Does anyone hate me? It is his look-out. I will continue kind and good-humoured to all the world, even to the injurious person himself. I am always ready to show him his error without abuse, or making a display of my own patience, but frankly, and with cordial sincerity, as Phocion did, unless indeed this was put on. Indeed your mind should always be so disposed, that the gods may examine you, and perceive that you are neither angry nor uneasy at anything. Now, if you follow the current of your nature of your own free will, and accept that which is now suitable to the universal nature, where is the harm in it, when you know you were made on purpose to comply with the interest of the universe?

People generally despise where they flatter, and cringe to those they would gladly overtop.

How fulsome and hollow does that man look that cries, "I'm resolved to deal straightforwardly with you." Hark you, friend, what need of all this flourish? Let your actions speak; your face ought to vouch for your speech. I would have virtue look out of the eye, no less apparently than love does in the sight of the beloved. I would have honesty and sincerity so incorporated with the constitution, that it should be discovered by the senses, and as easily distinguished as a strong breath, so that a man must be forced to find it out whether he would or no. But on the other side an affectation of sincerity is a very dagger. Nothing is more scandalous than the false friendship, and, therefore, of all things avoid it. In short, a man of integrity, sincerity, and good-nature can never be concealed, for his character is wrought into his countenance.

To bestow no more upon objects than they deserve; and where things are indifferent, to let our thoughts be so too,

is a noble expedient for happiness, and this faculty we have in our souls. The way to attain to this indifference is to look through matters, and take them quite asunder, remembering always that things cannot enter into the soul, nor force upon us any opinions about them; they are quiet. It is our fancy that makes opinions about them; it is we that write within ourselves, though it is in our power not to write. And if any false colours are laid on by surprise, we may rub them out if we please. We are likewise to consider that this trouble will not last, that death will relieve us soon. Where, then, is the difficulty of standing upon our guard a little while? If these things are in accordance with nature, bid them heartily welcome, and then your inclination will make you easy; but if they prove contrary to nature, look out for something that is more serviceable to your nature, and pursue that, even if it bring you no glory. For certainly every man may make himself happy if he can.

Consider the original of all things, the matter they are made of, the alterations they must run through, and the result of the change. And that all this does no manner of harm.

Concerning those that offend, consider in the first place, the relation you stand in towards men, and that we are all made for each other. And for my own part I am particularly set at the head of the world, like a ram over a flock, or a bull over a herd. You may go higher in your reasoning, if you please, and consider that either atoms or nature governs the universe. If the latter, then the coarser parts of the creation were made for the service of their betters; and these last for the sake of each other.

*Secondly*, Consider what men are at bed and board, and at other times; especially you should remember what strong compulsion of opinion they lie under, and with what pride they perform their acts.

*Thirdly*. Consider that if those men are in the right, you have no reason to be angry; but if they are in the wrong, it is because they know no better. They are under the necessity of their own ignorance. For as no soul is voluntarily deprived of truth, so nobody would offend against good manners, if they were rightly aware of it. And thus we see



people will not endure the charge of injustice, ingratitude, selfishness, or knavery of any description, without being stung at the imputation.

*Fourthly.* Do not forget you are like the rest of the world, and faulty yourself in a great many instances: that though you may forbear from some errors, it is not for want of inclination, and that nothing but cowardice, vanity, or some such base principle hinders you from sinning.

*Fifthly.* That it is sometimes a hard matter to be certain whether men do wrong, for their actions often are done with a reference to circumstances; and one must be thoroughly informed of a great many things before he can be rightly qualified to give judgment in the case.

*Sixthly.* When you are most angry and vexed remember that human life lasts but a moment, and that we shall all of us very quickly be laid in our graves.

*Seventhly.* Consider that it is not other people's actions (for they are lodged in their ruling principles), which disturb us, but only our own opinions about them. Do but then dismiss these notions, and do not fancy the thing a grievance, and your passion will have ceased immediately. But how can this fancy be discharged? By considering that bare suffering has no infamy in it. Now unless you restrain the notion of evil to what is disgraceful, you will be under a necessity of doing a great many unwarrantable things, and become a robber and a villain generally.

*Eighthly.* Consider that our anger and impatience often prove much more mischievous than the things about which we are angry or impatient.

*Ninthly.* That gentleness is invincible, provided it is of the right stamp, without anything of hypocrisy or malice. This is the way to disarm the most insolent, if you continue kind and unmoved under ill usage, if you strike in with the right opportunity for advice. If when he is going to do you an ill turn you endeavour to recover his understanding, and retrieve his temper by such language as this: I pray you, child, be quiet, men were never made to worry one another. I shall not be injured, but you are injuring yourself, child. Then proceed to illustrate the point by general and inoffensive

arguments. Show him that it is not the custom of bees to spend their stings upon their own kind, nor of cattle whose nature it is to dwell in herds. And let all this be done out of mere love and kindness, without any irony or scorn. Do not seem to lecture him or court the audience for commendation, but discourse him either alone; and if others are present, as if there was nobody but himself.

Lay up these nine heads in your memory with as much care as if they were a present from the nine muses, for now it is high time to begin to be a man for your lifetime. And here you must guard against flattery, as well as anger, for these are both unsocial qualities, and do a great deal of mischief. Remember always, when you are angry, that rage is the mark of an unmanly disposition. Mildness and temper are not only more human, but more masculine too. One thus affected appears much more brave, and firm, and manly than one that is vexed and angry. For he that has the least passion in these cases has always the most strength. On the other hand, as grief is a sign of weakness, so is anger too. A man is wounded in both these passions, and the smart is too big for him.

As you have received these nine precepts from the Muses, take this tenth if you please, from their leader, Apollo: That to wish that ill people may not do ill things is to wish an impossibility, and no better than madness. But then to give them leave to plague other folks, and desire to be privileged yourself, is a foolish and insolent expectation.

There are four evil qualities we must be particularly careful to avoid, and pull them up as fast as we find them, and address them as they rise in this fashion. "This fancy," say, "is unnecessary; this rough behaviour destroys society; this phrase I cannot say from my heart. Now this is most absurd, not to speak from your heart." These are three of them; and when you shall reproach yourself for anything, since this degrades the diviner part of you, makes your mind truckle to your body, and your reason to your pleasures, look upon that as the fourth.

Those particles of fire and air which are lodged in your body, notwithstanding their tendency to mount, submit to

the laws of the universe, and keep the rest of the elements company. Again, the earthy and watery parts in you, though they naturally press downwards, are raised above their level, and stand poised in an unnatural position; thus the elements serve the interest of the world. For when they have been fixed anywhere they keep their post till the signal is given to separate. And is it not then a scandalous thing that your mind should be the only deserter, and grow mutinous about her station, especially when her orders agree with her constitution, and nothing that is unnatural is enjoined? And yet she will not bear the conduct of her own faculties, but runs perfectly counter to humanity. For when a man turns knave or libertine, when he gives way to fears and anger and fits of the spleen, he does as it were run away from himself and desert his own nature; and further, when his mind complains of his fortune it quits the station in which Providence has placed it; for acquiescence and piety are no less its duty than honesty; for these virtues tend to the common interest, and are rather of greater antiquity and value than justice.

He that does not always drive at the same end in his life will never be uniform and of a piece in his conduct. But this hint is too short, unless you describe the quality that we ought principally to aim at. Now as people do not agree in the preferences of the things that in some way seem good to the many, unless in what relates to the common good, so a man ought to propose the benefit of society and the general interest of the world as his main aim. For he that levels at this mark will keep an even hand, and thus be always consistent with himself.

Remember the story of the country and the town mouse, and how pitifully the former was frightened and surprised.<sup>1</sup>

Socrates used to say the common objects of terror were nothing but bogies, fit only to scare children.

The Lacedæmonians, at their public shows, seated strangers under a canopy in the shade, but made their own people take their convenience as they found it.

Socrates, being invited to Perdiccas's court, made his

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<sup>1</sup> See Horace's Satires, ii. 6.

excuse:—I dare not come, says he, for fear of being put under an incapacity of returning an obligation, which I take to be the worst way of destroying a man imaginable.

It is a precept of the Ephesian philosophers,<sup>1</sup> that we should always furnish our memory with some eminent example of ancient virtue.

The Pythagoreans would have us look up into the sky every morning, to put us in mind of the order and constancy of the heavenly bodies, of the equality and purity of their matter, and how frankly they lie open to observation; for a star never wears a veil.

Remember how unconcernedly Socrates wore a sheepskin, when Xanthippe had got his coat on, and ran out with it. And how well he laughed off the matter to his friends, who were strangely out of countenance by seeing him in such a disguise.

People do not pretend to teach others to write and read till they have been taught themselves; this rule holds much more of life.

Be dumb; slaves have not the privilege of speaking.

“And my heart laughed within.”

“And virtue they will curse, speaking hard words.”

He is a mad man that expects figs on the trees in winter; and he is little better that calls for his children again when they are dead and buried.

Epictetus would have a man when he is kissing and caressing his child, say to himself at the same time: To-morrow perhaps you may die and leave me. These are the words of ill omen, you will say. That is your mistake: the consequences of mortality and the course of nature are no ominous things to think on, otherwise it would be an ominous business to cut down a little grass or corn.

Grapes are first sour, then ripe, then raisins, these are all no more than bare alterations; not into nothing, but into something which does not appear at present.

As Epictetus observes, nobody can rob another of his free will.

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<sup>1</sup> Followers of Heraclitus.

The same philosopher has taught us the art of managing our assent and movements; that we should have a regard to circumstances; that our inclinations should be generous and benevolent, and proportioned to the merit and dignity of things; that we must keep our desires from being headstrong, and never have an aversion for anything which it is out of our power to hinder.

Therefore, as Epictetus observes, the contest is no trifle, but whether we are to live in our wits or out of them.

It is a saying of Socrates to some untoward people: "What would you be at? Would you have the soul of a man or of a beast in you? Of a man. Of what sort of men, of those that use their reason, or those that abuse it? Of the first. Why then, continues the philosopher, do not you look out for this privilege? Because we have it already. What makes you then disagree, and fall foul upon each other?"

## BOOK XII

ALL those things you drudge, and range so much ground for, you may have at your ease, unless you are afraid of making yourself too happy. Your method to do your business is not to concern yourself about the time past, for that is never to be recovered; to rest the future with Providence, and only stick to the present, and improve that to all the noble purposes of piety and justice. The pious part will be discharged by being contented with your fate; and why should you not, since nature made you for each other? And as to the obligations of justice, you will acquit yourself here, provided you speak truth boldly and above board, and make law and the dignity of things your rule to act by. Wherein you are not to be checked in your progress by the misbehaviour, the ignorance, and impertinent reports of other people, nor yet by the sensations of the body that surrounds you, for the part that suffers must look to that. To go on: If, since your life is almost up, you lay aside all other matters, and only cultivate your mind, and pay a regard to the governing and diviner part of yourself; if you are not at all afraid of losing your life, but only of never beginning to live in accordance with nature, then you will act suitably to your



extraction, and deserve to be the offspring of the universe; then you will be no longer a stranger in your own country, nor be surprised at common accidents; you will never be dependent on this or that.

God sees through the soul of every man as clearly as if it was not wrapped up in matter, nor had anything of the shroud and coarseness of body about it. And God, with his intellectual part alone, touches those beings only that have flowed and proceeded from him. Now, if you would learn to do thus, a great deal of trouble would be saved; for he that can overlook his body will hardly disturb himself about the clothes he wears, the house he dwells in, about his reputation, or any part of this pomp and magnificence.

You consist of three parts—your body, your breath, and your mind. The first two are yours to take care of, but the latter is properly your person. Therefore, if you abstract from the notion of yourself, that is, of your mind, whatever other people either say or do, or whatever you may have said or done yourself formerly, together with all that disturbs you under the consideration of its coming to pass hereafter; if you throw the necessary motions of your carcass out of the definition, and those of the vortex that whirls about you, and by this means preserve your rational faculties in an independent state of innocence, free from the allotments of fate, holding close and steady to the virtues of justice, truth, and acquiescence; if I say, you keep your mind separate and distinguished from the objects of appetite and the events of time, both past and future, and make yourself like Empedocles's world,<sup>1</sup>

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“Round as a ball in joyous rest reposing,”

<sup>1</sup> Empedocles of Agrigentum was a philosopher who flourished about 444 B.C. He was the first to establish the number of four elements. These were, he thought, acted on by two moving causes—love (combination), and strife (separation). Originally the four elements were combined in a sphere where love reigned supreme, and all was peace and harmony. Strife, which was originally outside the sphere, gradually forced its way in, and so began the period of change in which we are living. Empedocles wrote an epic describing the origin of the world, and from this the line in the text is a quotation.

and concern yourself to live no longer than your real life, that is the present moment; if you do all this, you may move on till death stops you, with credit and in harmony with the deity within you.

I have often wondered how it comes to pass that everybody should love themselves best, and yet value their neighbour's opinion about themselves more than their own. Therefore, if any god or eminent instructor should stand at a man's elbow and order him to turn his inside outwards, and publish every thought and fancy as fast as they came into his head, he would not submit so much as to a day's discipline; thus we stand more in awe of our neighbour's judgments than our own.

How comes it that since the gods have contrived all things so well, and so much to the benefit of mankind, they should overlook this particular, and suffer men of great virtue and merit who, by their piety and devotion, were, as it were, in communion with the powers above, and kept always a correspondence with heaven, that they should suffer such men, I say, to be finally extinguished by death, and not give them their being again? Now, if the case stands thus, you may be assured had it been proper, the gods would have ordered it otherwise; for had it been right it would have been possible, and nature would certainly have brought it forth if it had been natural.

Be not satisfied with a superficial view of things, but penetrate into their matter and form, and the end they were made for.

What a mighty privilege is a man born to, since it is in his power not to do anything but what God Almighty approves, and to be satisfied with all the distribution of Providence.

When things follow from the course of nature, we ought not to blame the gods, for they do not wrong either willingly or against their will, nor yet men, for their misbehaviour is all involuntary. Therefore we must complain of nobody.

How unacquainted is that man with the world, and how ridiculous does he appear, that makes a wonder of anything he meets with in this life!

Either the order of things is fixed by irrevocable fate, or providence may be worked into compassion, or else the world floats at random without any steerage. Now if nature lies under an immovable necessity, to what purpose should you struggle against it? If the favour of Providence is to be gained, qualify yourself for the divine assistance; but if chance and confusion prevail, be you contented that in such a storm you have a governing intelligence within you, and if the waves run too high, let them carry away your body, your breath, and all things else, but there is no necessity your mind should be driven with them.

A lamp till it is extinguished holds its light, and shines without interruption, and can you find in your heart to see your truth, honesty, and sobriety extinguished before you?

When you fancy anyone has transgressed, say this to yourself: How do I know it is a fault? And granting it is, it may be his conscience has corrected him, and if so, he has torn his own face. Besides, you are to remember, that to wish an evil man should not do amiss, is just as wise as it would be to desire that a fig-tree should not bear juice in the figs, that children should not squall, nor horses neigh, nor a great many other things act according to the necessity of their condition. Pray, how would you have a man of such an unfortunate disposition behave himself? If you are angry, try to cure him.

If it is not seemly never do it, if it is not true, never speak it, for your impulse should always be under your control.

Look always nicely into whatever makes an impression upon your mind, distinguishing it into cause and matter; and consider its purpose and design and the period of time, beyond which it is unlikely to continue.

Consider, for it is high time, that you have something more divine in you than the mechanism of passion, than the wires of a puppet. What is there now in my soul? Is it fear, or suspicion, or desire? Or anything of this coarse nature?

Take care never to do anything without thought, and design, nor for any other end but what may be serviceable to the interest of society.

Consider that in a little time you will neither have place, nor being, that your contemporaries will have the same fate, and the present scene of nature be shut up. For all things are formed by nature to change and turn and drop in pieces, that new ones may be continually made out of them.

Remember that all things are opinion, and that it is in your own power to think as you please. Therefore remove the opinion, and then as if you had doubled some dangerous cape, you will have nothing but a steady course, a smooth sea, and a waveless bay to receive you.

Every activity that ceases in due time, suffers nothing by breaking off: Neither does the agent receive any harm from this. Thus life, which is nothing but a series and continuation of action, comes to no harm by having a seasonable period put to it: Neither does he who has ended this series in due time sustain any loss. Now nature assigns the term of life; some times this period is fixed by particular nature, as it happens when a man dies of old age; but let it come late or early, common nature has certainly a hand in it. And thus the parts of nature changing from one form to another preserve the whole world in perpetual youth and vigour. Now that is always good and reasonable which makes for the service of the universe. From hence it follows that bare dying can be no real evil, seeing there is nothing disgraceful in it, for it is both involuntary with respect to ourselves, and serviceable to the general interest. Therefore, it is certainly a good thing, since it is suitable, and seasonable, and profitable to the universe, for he that follows the Deity with his motions, and is led by his will to the same ends, is led by God himself.

Let these three hints lie ready for service. *First*, As to your own actions let nothing be done rashly nor to no purpose, nor indeed in any other manner than justice itself would have ordered it. And as for external fortune, consider that it is the blind distribution of chance or else the appointment of providence. Now either to murmur against chance or impeach providence is extremely absurd. *Secondly*, Consider what a slight thing man is from his conception till he receives his soul; and from its reception till its loss; consider too the parts of his composition and the state of his dissolution.



*Thirdly*, Consider that if you could shoot yourself at pleasure into the sky and thence take a view of human affairs, you would perceive a strange medley of condition, and discover at the same time the air, and ether too, plentifully stocked with inhabitants. And that if you mounted never so often, you would have the old prospect. Alas! things are generally of the same complexion and of the same short continuance too, and yet how strangely we are conceited of them.

Discharge opinion and you are safe; and pray who can hinder you from doing it?

When you are uneasy upon any account, you have forgotten that all things fall out according to the nature of the universe, and that another man's fault is no concern of yours, that what you reckon grievances is nothing but the old way of the world and will come over again, and is now to be met with in a thousand places. You have forgotten that all mankind are of kin, for though they may be unallied in flesh and blood, their understandings are all of the same family. You do not remember that every man's soul is a portion of the Deity, and derived from thence, that we have nothing properly our own, but that our children, our bodies, and our breath, are all borrowed from heaven, that opinion governs all, and that it is not possible for any body to live, or lose any more than the present moment. All this you seem to have forgotten.

Reflect frequently upon those that have formerly been mightily disturbed with accidents of any kind, that have carried their animosities and feuds to the most flaming excess, that have made the most glorious figure or met with the greatest misfortune, and then ask yourself, Where are they all now? They are vanished like a little smoke, they are nothing but ashes, and a tale, or not even a tale. Recollect likewise everything of this sort, what Fabius Catullinus did at his country seat; Lucius Lupus, in his garden; Stertinius, at Baiæ; Tiberius, at Capræ; Rufus, at Velia, in short, the overweening importance attached to anything whatsoever; and know that the prize is insignificant, and the play not worth the candle. It is much more becoming a philosopher to stand clear of affectation, to be honest and temperate upon



all occasions, and to follow cheerfully wherever the gods lead on, for nothing is more scandalous than a man that is proud of his humility.

To those that ask me the reason of my being so earnest in religious worship, and whether I ever saw any of the gods, or which way I am convinced of the certainty of their existence; in the first place, I answer, that the gods are not invisible. But granting they were, the objection would signify nothing, for I never had a sight of my own soul, and yet I have a great value for it. And thus by my constant experience of the power of the gods I have a proof of their being, and a reason for my veneration.

The best provision for a happy life is to dissect everything, view its own nature, and divide it into matter and form. To practise honesty in good earnest, and speak truth from the very soul of you. What remains but to live easy and cheerful, and crowd one good action so close to another that there may not be the least empty space between them.

The light of the sun is but one and the same, though it is divided by the interposition of walls and mountains, and abundance of other opaque bodies. There is but one common matter, though it is parcelled out among bodies of different qualities. There is but one sensitive soul too, notwithstanding it is divided among innumerable natures and individual limitations. And lastly, the rational soul, though it seems to be split into distinction, is but one and the same. Now, excepting this last, the other parts above-mentioned, such as breath and matter, though without apprehension, or any common affection to tie them to each other, are yet upheld by an intelligent being, and by that faculty which pushes things of the same nature to the same place; but human understandings have a peculiar disposition to union; they stick together by inclination, and nothing can extinguish such sociable thoughts in them.

What is it you hanker after? Is it bare existence? or sensation? or motion? or strength, that you may lose it again in decay? What? Is it the privilege of speech, or the power of thinking in general? Is any of this worth desiring? If all these things are trifles, proceed to something that is worth

your while, and that is to be governed by reason and the Deity. And yet you cannot be said to value these last-mentioned privileges rightly, if you are disturbed because death must take them from you.

What a small part of immeasurable and infinite time falls to the share of a single mortal, and how soon is every one swallowed up in eternity! What a handful of the universal matter goes to the making of a human body, and what a very little of the universal soul too! And on what a narrow clod with respect to the whole earth do you crawl upon! Consider all this, and reckon nothing great, unless it be to act in conformity to your own reason, and to suffer as the universal nature shall appoint you. The great business of a man is to improve his mind, therefore consider how he does this. As for all other things, whether in our power to compass or not, they are no better than lifeless ashes and smoke.

We cannot have a more promising notion to set us above the fear of death, than to consider that it has been despised even by that sect [the Epicureans] who made pleasure and pain the standard of good and evil. He that likes no time so well as the fitting season, he that is indifferent whether he has room for a long progress in reason or not, or whether he has a few or a great many years to view the world in, a person thus qualified will never be afraid of dying.

Hark ye friend: you have been a burgher of this great city, what matter though you have lived in it five years or three; if you have observed the laws of the corporation, the length or shortness of the time make no difference. Where is the hardship then if nature, that planted you here, orders your removal? You cannot say you are sent off by a tyrant or unjust judge. No; you quit the stage as fairly as a player does that has his discharge from the master of the revels. But I have only gone through three acts, and not held out to the end of the fifth. You say well; but in life three acts make the play entire. He that ordered the opening of the first scene now gives the sign for shutting up the last; you are neither accountable for one nor the other; therefore retire well satisfied, for He, by whom you are dismissed, is satisfied too.

THE APOLOGETICUS  
OF  
TERTULLIAN

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*WITH AN INTRODUCTION UPON*  
THE EARLY CHRISTIAN FATHERS

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# INTRODUCTION

## THE EARLY CHRISTIAN FATHERS

BY THE REV. JOHN DAMEN MAGUIRE, PH. D.

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IN August, 410 A. D., during the reign of Honorius, Rome was sacked by a mixed army of Goths and Huns under the command of Alaric. Almost to the day, eight hundred years had passed since the city had been in the possession of a foreign foe; and during that time, Rome, first Republican and then Imperial, had extended her victorious sway over three continents. She had perfected a vast governmental system, had elaborated a marvellous culture and developed a literature which is still basic in the literatures of civilization. The working out of this stupendous achievement, in thought and art and deed, attained by Rome in her long career, was gradual, intermittent and fluctuating; nor is it now possible, amid so many momentous events, to fix upon any one of these as definitely setting a term to the life of the ancient world. The old order faded insensibly into the new. In all the post-Vergilian literature there are premonitions of the coming centuries, and the later ages never wholly lost reminiscences of the classic tradition. Thus, while it is possible definitely to mark the beginning of Latin literature, there is no fixed point at which its history may be said to close. From the day on which Livius Andronicus, the Greek prisoner of war, produced the first Latin play in the Roman theatre, up to the day on which Rome capitulated to the barbarian Alaric, Latin literature shared in all the vicissitudes of the Roman state itself, its development and decay bring the reflexes of the changes, political, social and economic, of which Roman history is the record. In



those centuries gradually the literature, patterned largely upon a careful study and imitation of Greek models, passed through all its varied phases, from feeble beginnings first to substantial achievement, and thence onward to maturity and the perfection which it finally reached in the earlier years of the principate of Augustus. Then followed the inevitable reaction, and the post-Augustan history of Roman literature is simply the record of an attempt, only partially successful, to repeat and prolong the glorious achievement of the past.

During the years, however, from Augustus to Commodus, a momentous change had overtaken the world. The teachings of Christianity during that period had spread so rapidly that the Christian religion came finally to be regarded as a serious menace to the existing polytheism, which was the frame-work of the state religion. Year by year Christianity had widened its influence, in the transformation of character and conduct which its teachings inspired; and, though it had been opposed by all the power of the Roman Empire and persecuted centuries long, it nevertheless had risen more elastic than ever out of each persecution, and thus had found in opposition and in persecution those very forces, vital and enduring, which it needed to realize its literature.

Christianity has little to show in the way of literature during the first century of its existence; during the second century, however, ecclesiastical writings multiply and become almost exclusively apologetic in character. And this apologetic character, so distinctive of such early writers as Aristides of Athens, Aristo of Pella, and Justin Martyr, becomes fixed and remains a permanent quality in patristic literature. It is equally in evidence in Minucius Felix as in the writings of Tertullian; and the master-piece of Christian antiquity, the *De Civitate Dei* of St. Augustine, is an apology for the Christian religion.

With the coming of the third century came also a desire for a scientific treatment of Christian doctrine. Ecclesiastical literature thus entered upon a new development. From now onward there was to be within the Church itself a peaceful growth of literary activity. This scientific tendency

found its best expression in the Christian East, where the Catechetical School of Alexandria soon became known as the centre of ecclesiastical science. About 180 A.D., this school had already reached a high degree of efficiency, and, according to Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* V, 10, 1), seems to have been long established. The two most famous teachers of this celebrated school were CLEMENT (150-214?) and ORIGEN (186-255), both of whom labored with notable success in enlisting Greek science and culture in the service of the Christian cause.

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA was born about 150 A.D., probably at Athens. After his conversion to Christianity he travelled extensively and finally came under the influence of PANTAENUS, who was teaching at Alexandria. About 180 A.D., he became a presbyter, and was made an associate and assistant to Pantaenus, after the latter's death, about 200 A.D., Clement succeeding him as head-master of the school. About 203 A.D., owing to the persecution of Septimius, Clement left Alexander and went to Asia Minor. A letter addressed by Alexander to Origen in 215 A.D., speaks of Clement as already dead.

The writings of Clement cover a wide range of subjects and are epoch-making in the history of patristic literature. The most important of his works is his extensive "Introduction to Christianity" in three parts, namely, the Protrepticus, or exhortation to the heathen, the Paedagogus, or training in the Christian life, and the Stromata, or miscellanies, a proposed scientific account of the revealed truths of Christianity. Some minor works make up the list of his literary activities.

ORIGEN (Adamantius, "the man of steel") was born of Christian parents, probably at Alexandria in 185 or 186 A.D. He succeeded to the presidency of the Catechetical School after the departure of Clement in 202 or 203 A.D. He remained in charge of the school until about 215, and it was during these years, while meditating on *Matth. xix, 12*, that Origen mutilated himself. In the year 230 A.D., while on a journey to Athens, he stopped at Palestine and was ordained priest by two of his friends, Alexander and

Theoctistus,—this, without the knowledge of his bishop, and in spite of his self-inflicted mutilation. He was recalled to Alexandria and deposed from the presidency of the school by two synods, held 231 and 232 A.D.; in addition to that, he was degraded from the priesthood because of the irregularity of his ordination and because of his unecclesiastical teachings. He retired to Caesarea and suffered during the Decian persecution. He died at Tyre in 254 or 255 A.D.

Origen was one of the most prolific writers of whom there is record. There are rumors in antiquity of 6,000 books which he is said to have written. Another story catalogues his works under 2,000 headings, and St. Jerome (Ep. 33), repeating Eusebius numbers about 800 titles. We possess but a small remnant of his works, and of this remnant one-half is known only through Latin translations. His writings range over every department of ecclesiastical science, for he was the first to construct, though not to conceive, a philosophical-theological system at once comprehensive and uniform.

In the gigantic work known as the Hexapla, Origen set about exhibiting the relation of the Septuagint to the original Hebrew text of the Bible. The work was constructed in six columns containing respectively the Hebrew text in Hebrew letters and Greek letters, as well as the Greek versions of Aquila, Symmachus, the Septuagint and Theodotian. The Exegetical works of Origen may be grouped under three headings; Scholia, Homilies and Commentaries. His Apologetic work consists of a treatise in eight books, against Celsus, a work pronounced to be the most perfect piece of Apologetic literature of the primitive Church.

In the West as early as the third century, ecclesiastical literature begins to exhibit certain native peculiarities. First of all, the organ of this Western Christianity is Latin and the tone that dominates its contents is distinctly Roman. The spirit that reigns throughout these works is sober and practical, for their direct purpose is to secure the immediately necessary and the useful. As in the East so in the Latin Church, the exigency of the times marks the Apologetic character as supreme. Biblical studies are represented by Vic-

TORINUS AFER and HIPPOLYTUS; COMMODIANUS leads the procession of Christian poets.

The first representatives chosen from among these writers is TERTULLIAN, whose full name was Quintus Septimius Florentino Tertullianus. He was born about 160 A.D., at Carthage, where his father was serving as a centurion of the proconsul of Africa. After an excellent training Tertullian probably became an advocate and was converted to Christianity about 193 A.D. According to St. Jerome (*De Viris Ill.* c. 53) Tertullian was ordained a priest. In the year 202 A.D., or thereabouts, he openly became an adherent of the sect known as Montanists and among these he soon founded a sect known as the Tertullianists. St. Jerome (*ibid.*) says that he lived to an advanced age.

Tertullian was easily the most original as well as the most prolific of all the Latin writers. No writer according to Ebert ever more fully justified the saying of Buffon, that a man's style is himself, than Tertullian. In all his writings the personal note is ever dominant, and his habitual atmosphere is one of conflict. The writings that have come down to us fall easily into three groups: Apologetic, in defence of Christianity; Dogmatico-Apologetic, refutations of heresy, and Practico-Ascetical, dealing with Christian morality and discipline. The *Apologeticus* or *Apologeticum* (ancient authorities do not agree) was written in the year 197. The special characteristic of the work lies in the boldness with which Tertullian deals with the political accusations against the Christians. It is still a question whether the *Octavius*, written by MINUCIUS FELIX, was a source used by Tertullian in his *Apologeticus*, as Ebert, Schwenke and Reck hold; or whether Minucius used the work of Tertullian, as Lactantius implied in antiquity and as Masebrieu maintained quite recently. One other work of Tertullian is worthy of special mention, namely, the *De Anima*. This work is interesting because it is the first Christian psychology, though its tone is theological as well as psychological. The purpose of the work was to describe the doctrine of the human soul according to Christian revelation. The first section deals with the nature and the faculties of the soul. In the second section the author discusses the origin of the soul, and in



the third and final section he treats of certain psychological states such as sleep, dreams, death and the place and state of the soul after death.

Other important writers of the period now under discussion were ST. CYPRIAN, the noble Bishop of Carthage; LAC-TANTIUS, the "Christian Cicero"; ST. ATHANASIUS, "The Pillar of the Church"; STS. BASIL, GREGORY OF NANZIANZUS, and GREGORY OF NYSSA, the "Splendid Trinity in which are concentrated all the rays of that brilliant epoch of Christianity"; ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, "The Golden-mouth Orator"; ST. AMBROSE, the statesman, orator and bishop of Milan; ST. JEROME, whose monumental work of preparing a serviceable and trustworthy text of the Bible in the Latin language remains one of the marvels of literary history.

Finally we come to ST. AUGUSTINE, one of the most widely read fathers of the early church. The full name of this remarkable writer was Aurelius Augustinus. He was born November the thirteenth in the year 354 A.D., at Tagaste, a small and insignificant town of Numidia. His father became a Christian only a short time before his death; his mother, however, Monica, came of a Christian family. In the first nine books of his Confessions, Augustine himself describes his intellectual and moral development from his earliest childhood to the death of his beloved mother, in 387 A.D. At the age of nineteen, while reading the Hortensius of Cicero, Augustine felt himself deeply moved with the love for the "immortal beauty of wisdom"; the great work that he was reading, however, failed to satisfy the longing of his soul *quod nomen Christi non erat ibi*, "because the name of Christ was absent." (Conf., 4, 8.) In the year 374 A.D., he joined the sect known as Manichaeans and from that time until 386 A.D. his life was one long struggle with doubt. In the year 383 A.D. he obtained the chair of rhetoric at Milan and thus came under the influence of the great St. Ambrose. He was finally baptized April the twenty-fifth, 387 A.D. In 388 A.D. he returned to Carthage after a year spent in study in Rome. For the history of the remaining years of his life we are indebted to his friend Possidius, bishop of Calama, who wrote (432 A.D.), a *Vita Sancti Augustini*, which begins where the Con-



fessions cease. He was ordained priest at Hippo Regius in 391 A.D. and was consecrated co-adjutor bishop by the primate Megalius in 394 or 395 A.D. Shortly after the death of the latter Augustine became bishop of Hippo. During the years of his episcopacy Augustine wrote against the Manichæan, the Donatist and the Pelagian heresies. In the last years of his life he saw the Roman Empire crumbling away. He had lived to see Rome, the mistress of the world, sacked and given over to pillage; and when he lay dying in 430 A.D. the barbarians who had overrun the fairest portions of his beloved Africa were camped at the gates beleaguering his episcopal city of Hippo.

The Benedictine edition, which is the basis of all subsequent recensions of the works of St. Augustine, begins with two books of Retractions and thirteen books of Confessions. In the former work, the Retractions, written about three years before he died, the author surveys critically all his literary productions from the time of his conversion. He makes in his resumé a chronological list of ninety-three works distributed into two hundred and thirty-two books. Throughout the whole compendium he takes occasion at every point to correct the inaccuracies of his earlier works.

The second work, named above the Confessions, written about 400 A.D., is of absorbing interest. Formally considered the work is an outpouring of the writer's heart in the presence of the All-knowing God. The first nine books with which Augustine prefaces his Confessions seek to establish by personal experience the principle laid down in the beginning, *Fecisti nos ad te (Domine) et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te*, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our heart is not at peace until it findeth its rest in Thee." The tenth book is a self analysis and the last three are meditations on the creation—the narrative of Genesis.

The other writings of St. Augustine cover a wide range of subjects and discuss such matters as rhetoric, music, dialectics, philosophy, Scripture, grammar and psychology. The most important, however, of his writings is the *De Civitate Dei* (The City of God). This work was composed in twenty-two books and published in separated portions in the interval between

413 and 426 A.D. It owes its origin to a renewal of pagan accusations against Christianity. It had been charged that the gods of the ancient religion were angry at the spread of Christianity and had withdrawn their favour; as a consequence Rome had fallen under the barbarian assault of Alaric and his followers. Augustine not only answers this ancient calumny, but he undertakes to establish for all time the true relation obtaining between Christianity and paganism. He passes in review the present and the past and he forecasts the future from the past. He charts the whole course of events and he interprets them with insight and power. His apology thus rises to the dignity and the worth of a magnificent philosophy of history, a work that towers among other apologies of Christian Antiquity as an "Alpine peak towers among lesser heights."

# APOLOGETICUS

BY TERTULLIAN

RULERS of the Roman Empire, if, seated for the administration of justice on your lofty tribunal, under the gaze of every eye, and occupying there all but the highest position in the state, you may not openly inquire into and sift before the world the real truth in regard to the charges made against the Christians; if in this case alone you are afraid or ashamed to exercise your authority in making public inquiry with the carefulness which becomes justice; if, finally, the extreme severities inflicted on our people in recently private judgments, stand in the way of our being permitted to defend ourselves before you, you cannot surely forbid the Truth to reach your ears by the secret pathway of a noiseless book.

She has no appeals to make to you in regard of her condition, for that does not excite her wonder. She knows that she is but a sojourner on the earth, and that among strangers she naturally finds foes; and more than that, that her origin, her dwelling-place, her hope, her recompense, her honours, are above. One thing, meanwhile, she anxiously desires of earthly rulers—not to be condemned unknown. What harm can it do to the laws, supreme in their domain, to give her a hearing? Nay, for that part of it, will not their absolute supremacy be more conspicuous in their condemning her, even after she has made her plea? But if unheard sentence is pronounced against her, besides the odium of an unjust deed, they will incur the merited suspicion of doing it with some idea that it is unjust, as not wishing to hear what they may not be able to hear and condemn.

We lay this before you as the first ground on which we urge that your hatred to the name of Christian is unjust. And the very reason which seems to excuse this injustice (I mean ignorance) at once aggravates and convicts it. For what is there more unfair than to hate a thing of which you know

nothing, even though it deserve to be hated? Hatred is only merited when it is *known* to be merited. But without that knowledge, whence is its justice to be vindicated? for that is to be proved, not from the mere fact that an aversion exists, but from acquaintance with the subject.

When men, then, give way to a dislike simply because they are entirely ignorant of the nature of the thing disliked, why may it not be precisely the very sort of thing they should not dislike? So we maintain that they are both ignorant while they hate us, and hate us unrighteously while they continue in ignorance, the one thing being the result of the other either way of it. The proof of their ignorance, at once condemning and excusing their injustice, is this, that those who once hated Christianity because they knew nothing about it, no sooner come to know it than they all lay down at once their enmity. From being its haters they become its disciples. By simply getting acquainted with it, they begin now to hate what they had formerly been, and to profess what they had formerly hated; and their numbers are as great as are laid to our charge.

The outcry is that the State is filled with Christians—that they are in the fields, in the citadels, in the islands: they make lamentations as for some calamity, that both sexes, every age and condition, even high rank, are passing over to the profession of the Christian faith; and yet for all, their minds are not awakened to the thought of some good they have failed to notice in it. They must not allow any truer suspicions to cross their minds; they have no desire to make closer trial. Here alone the curiosity of human nature slumbers. They like to be ignorant, though to others the knowledge has been bliss. Anacharsis reproved the rude venturing to criticise the cultured; how much more this judging of those who know, by men who are entirely ignorant, might he have denounced! Because they already dislike, they want to know no more. But thus they prejudge that of which they are ignorant to be such, that, if they came to know it, it could no longer be the object of their aversion; since, if inquiry finds nothing worthy of dislike, it is certainly proper to cease from an unjust dislike,—while if its bad character comes plainly out, instead of the de-

testation entertained for it being thus diminished, a stronger reason for perseverance in that detestation is obtained, even under the authority of justice itself.

But, says one, a thing is not good merely because multitudes go over to it; for how many have the bent of their nature towards whatever is bad! how many go astray into ways of error! It is undoubted. Yet a thing that is thoroughly evil, not even those whom it carries away venture to defend as good. Nature throws a veil either of fear or shame over all evil. For instance, you find that criminals are eager to conceal themselves, avoid appearing in public, are in trepidation when they are caught, deny their guilt when they are accused; even when they are put to the rack, they do not easily or always confess; when there is no doubt about their condemnation, they grieve for what they have done. In their self-communings they admit their being impelled by sinful dispositions, but they lay the blame either on fate or on the stars. They are unwilling to acknowledge that the thing is theirs, because they own that it is wicked.

But what is there like this in the Christian's case? The only shame or regret he feels, is at not having been a Christian earlier. If he is pointed out, he glories in it; if he is accused, he offers no defence; interrogated, he makes voluntary confession; condemned, he renders thanks. What sort of evil thing is this, which wants all the ordinary peculiarities of evil—fear, shame, subterfuge, penitence, lamenting? What! is that a crime in which the criminal rejoices? to be accused of which is his ardent wish, to be punished for which is his felicity? You cannot call it madness, you who stand convicted of knowing nothing of the matter.

If, again, it is certain that we are the most wicked of men, why do you treat us so differently from our fellows, that is, from other criminals, it being only fair that the same crime should get the same treatment? When the charges made against us are made against others, they are permitted to make use both of their own lips and of hired pleaders to show their innocence. They have full opportunity of answer and debate; in fact, it is against the law to condemn anybody undefended and unheard. Christians alone are forbidden to say



anything in exculpation of themselves, in defence of the truth, to help the judge to a righteous decision, all that is cared about is having what the public hatred demands—the confession of the name, not examination of the charge; while in your ordinary judicial investigations, on a man's confession of the crime of murder, or sacrilege, or incest, or treason, to take the points of which we are accused, you are not content to proceed at once to sentence,—you do not take that step till you thoroughly examine the circumstances of the confession—what is the real character of the deed, how often, where, in what way, when he has done it, who were privy to it, and who actually took part with him in it.

Nothing like this is done in our case, though the falsehoods disseminated about us ought to have the same sifting, that it might be found how many murdered children each of us had tasted; how many incests each of us had shrouded in darkness; what cooks, what dogs had been witness of our deeds. Oh, how great the glory of the ruler who should bring to light some Christian who had devoured a hundred infants! But, instead of that, we find that even inquiry in regard to our case is forbidden. For the younger Pliny, when he was ruler of a province, having condemned some Christians to death, and driven some from their steadfastness, being still annoyed by their great numbers, at last sought the advice of Trajan, the reigning emperor, as to what he was to do with the rest, explaining to his master that, except an obstinate disinclination to offer sacrifices, he found in their religious services nothing but meetings at early morning for singing hymns to Christ and God, and sealing home their way of life by a united pledge to be faithful to their religion, forbidding murder, adultery, dishonesty, and other crimes. Upon which Trajan wrote back that Christians were by no means to be sought after; but, if they were brought before him, they should be punished.

O miserable deliverance,—under the necessities of the case, a self-contradiction! It forbids them to be sought after as innocent, and it commands them to be punished as guilty. It is at once merciful and cruel; it passes by, and it punishes. Why dost thou play a game of evasion upon thyself, O Judge—

ment? If thou condemnest, why dost thou not also inquire? If thou dost not inquire, why dost thou not also absolve? Military stations are distributed through all the provinces for tracking robbers. Against traitors and public foes every man is a soldier; search is made even for their confederates and accessaries. The Christian alone must not be sought, though he may be brought and accused before the judge: as if a search had any other end than that in view! And so you condemn the man for whom nobody wished a search to be made when he is presented to you, and who even now does not deserve punishment, I suppose, because of his guilt, but because, though forbidden to be sought, he was found.

And then, too, you do not in that case deal with us in the ordinary way of judicial proceedings against offenders; for, in the case of others denying, you apply the torture to make them confess—Christians alone you torture, to make them deny; whereas, if we were guilty of any crime, we should be sure to deny it, and you with your tortures would force us to confession. Nor indeed should you hold that our crimes require no such investigation merely on the ground that you are convinced by our profession of the name that the deeds were done,—*you* who are daily wont, though you know well enough what murder is, none the less to extract from the confessed murderer a full account of how the crime was perpetrated. So that with all the greater perversity you act, when, holding our crimes proved by our confession of the name of Christ, you drive us by torture to fall from our confession, that, repudiating the name, we may in like manner repudiate also the crimes with which, from that same confession, you had assumed that we were chargeable.

I suppose, though you believe us to be the worst of mankind, you do not wish us to perish. For thus, no doubt, you are in the habit of bidding the murderer deny, and of ordering the man guilty of sacrilege to the rack if he persevere in his acknowledgment! Is that the way of it?

But if thus you do not deal with us as criminals, you declare us thereby innocent, when as innocent you are anxious that we do not persevere in a confession which you know will

bring on us a condemnation of necessity, not of justice, at your hands. "I am a Christian," the man cries out. He tells you what he is; you wish to hear from him what he is not. Occupying your place of authority to extort the truth, you do your utmost to get lies from us. "I am," he says, "that which you ask me if I am. Why do you torture me to sin? I confess, and you put me to the rack. What would you do if I denied?" Certainly you give no ready credence to others when they deny. When we deny you believe at once.

Let this perversity of yours lead you to suspect that there is some hidden power in the case under whose influence you act against the forms, against the nature of public justice, even against the very laws themselves. For, unless I am greatly mistaken, the laws enjoin offenders to be searched out, and not to be hidden away. They lay it down that persons who own a crime are to be condemned, not acquitted. The decrees of the senate, the commands of your chiefs, lay this clearly down. The power of which you are servants is a civil, not a tyrannical domination. Among tyrants, indeed, torments used to be inflicted even as punishments: with you they are mitigated to a means of questioning alone. Keep to your law in these as necessary till confession is obtained; and if the torture is anticipated by confession, there will be no occasion for it: sentence should be passed; the criminal should be given over to the penalty which is his due, not released. Accordingly, no one is eager for the acquittal of the guilty; it is not right to desire that, and so no one is ever compelled to deny.

Well, you think the Christian a man of every crime, an enemy of the gods, of the emperor, of the laws, of good morals, of all nature; yet you compel him to deny, that you may acquit him, which without his denial you could not do. You play fast and loose with the laws. You wish him to deny his guilt, that you may, even against his will, bring him out blameless and free from all guilt in reference to the past! Whence is this strange perversity on your part? How is it you do not reflect that a spontaneous confession is greatly more worthy of credit than a compelled denial; or consider whether, when compelled to deny, a man's denial may not be in good faith, and whether acquitted, he may not, then and there, as soon

as the trial is over, laugh at your hostility, a Christian as much as ever?

Seeing, then, that in everything you deal differently with us than with other criminals, bent upon the one object of taking from us our name (indeed, it is ours no more if we do what Christians never do), it is made perfectly clear that there is no crime of any kind in the case, but merely a name which a certain system, ever working against the truth, pursues with its enmity, doing this chiefly with the object of securing that men may have no desire to know for certain what they know for certain they are entirely ignorant of.

Hence, too, it is that they believe about us things of which they have no proof, and they are disinclined to have them looked into, lest the charges, they would rather take on trust, are all proved to have no foundation, that the name so hostile to that rival power—its crimes presumed, not proved—may be condemned simply on its own confession. So we are put to the torture if we confess, and we are punished if we persevere, and if we deny we are acquitted, because all the contention is about a name.

Finally, why do you read out of your tablet-lists that such a man is a Christian? why not also that he is a murderer? And if a Christian is a murderer, why not guilty, too, of incest, or any other vile thing you believe of us? In our case alone you are either ashamed or unwilling to mention the very names of our crimes. If to be called a "Christian" does not imply any crime, the name is surely very hateful, when that of itself is made a crime.

What are we to think of it, that most people so blindly knock their heads against the hatred of the Christian name; that when they bear favourable testimony to any one, they mingle with it abuse of the name he bears? "A good man," says one, "is Gaius Seius, only that he is a Christian." So another, "I am astonished that a wise man like Lucius should have suddenly become a Christian." Nobody thinks it needful to consider whether Gaius is not good and Lucius wise, on this very account that he is a Christian; or a Christian, for the reason that he is wise and good. They praise what they know, they abuse what they are ignorant of, and they inspire their



knowledge with their ignorance; though in fairness you should rather judge of what is unknown from what is known, than what is known from what is unknown.

Others, in the case of persons whom, before they took the name of Christian, they had known as loose, and vile, and wicked, put on them a brand from the very thing which they praise. In the blindness of their hatred, they fall foul of their own approving judgment! "What a woman she was! how wanton! how gay! What a youth he was! how profligate! how libidinous!—they have become Christians!" So the hated name is given to a reformation of character.

Some even barter away their comforts for that hatred, content to bear injury, if they are kept free at home from the object of their bitter enmity. The wife, now chaste, the husband, now no longer jealous, casts out of his house; the son, now obedient, the father, who used to be so patient, disinherits; the servant, now faithful, the master, once so mild, commands away from his presence: it is a high offence for any one to be reformed by the detested name. Goodness is of less value than hatred of Christians.

Well now, if there is this dislike of the name, what blame can you attach to names? What accusation can you bring against mere designations, save that something in the word sounds either barbarous, or unlucky, or scurrilous, or unchaste? But Christian, so far as the meaning of the word is concerned, is derived from anointing. Yes, and even when it is wrongly pronounced by you "Chrestianus" (for you do not even know accurately the name you hate), it comes from sweetness and benignity. You hate, therefore, in the guiltless, even a guiltless name.

But the special ground of dislike to the sect is, that it bears the name of its Founder. Is there anything new in a religious sect getting for its followers a designation from its master? Are not the philosophers called from the founders of *their* systems—Platonists, Epicureans, Pythagoreans? Are not the Stoics and Academics so called also from the places in which they assembled and stationed themselves? and are not physicians named from Erasistratus, grammarians from Aristarchus, cooks even from Apicius? And yet the bearing of the



name, transmitted from the original institutor with whatever he has instituted, offends no one. No doubt, if it is proved that the sect is a bad one, and so its founder bad as well, that will prove that the name is bad and deserves our aversion, in respect of the character both of the sect and its author. Before, therefore, taking up a dislike to the name, it behoved you to consider the sect in the author, or the author in the sect. But now, without any sifting and knowledge of either, the mere name is made matter of accusation, the mere name is assailed, and a sound alone brings condemnation on a sect and its author both, while of both you are ignorant, because they have such and such a designation, not because they are convicted of anything wrong.

And so, having made these remarks as it were by way of preface, that I might show in its true colours the injustice of the public hatred against us, I shall now take my stand on the plea of our blamelessness; and I shall not only refute the things which are objected to us, but I shall also retort them on the objectors, that in this way all may know that Christians are free from the very crimes they are so well aware prevail among themselves, that they may at the same time be put to the blush for their accusations against us,—accusations I shall not say of the worst of men against the best, but now, as they will have it, against those who are only their fellows in sin. We shall reply to the accusation of all the various crimes we are said to be guilty of in secret, such as we find them committing in the light of day, and as being guilty of which we are held to be wicked, senseless, worthy of punishment, deserving of ridicule.

But since, when our truth meets you successfully at all points, the authority of the laws as a last resort is set up against it, so that it is either said that their determinations are absolutely conclusive, or the necessity of obedience is, however unwillingly, preferred to the truth, I shall first, in this matter of the laws, grapple with you as with their chosen protectors. Now first, when you sternly lay it down in your sentences, "It is not lawful for you to exist," and with unhesitating rigour you enjoin this to be carried out, you exhibit the violence and unjust domination of mere tyranny, if you

deny the thing to be lawful, simply on the ground that you wish it to be unlawful, not because it ought. But if you would have it unlawful because it *ought* not to be lawful, without doubt that should have no permission of law which does harm; and on this ground, in fact, it is already determined that whatever is beneficial is legitimate.

Well, if I have found what your law prohibits to be good, as one who has arrived at such a previous opinion, has it not lost its power to debar me from it, though that very thing, if it were evil, it would justly forbid to me? If your law has gone wrong, it is of human origin, I think; it has not fallen from heaven. Is it wonderful that man should err in making a law, or come to his senses in rejecting it? Did not the Lacedæmonians amend the laws of Lycurgus himself, thereby inflicting such pain on their author that he shut himself up, and doomed himself to death by starvation? Are you not yourselves every day, in your efforts to illumine the darkness of antiquity, cutting and hewing with the new axes of imperial rescripts and edicts, that whole ancient and rugged forest of your laws? Has not Severus, that most resolute of rulers, but yesterday repealed the ridiculous Papian laws which compelled people to have children before the Julian laws allow matrimony to be contracted, and that though they have the authority of age upon their side?

There were laws, too, in old times, that parties against whom a decision had been given might be cut in pieces by their creditors; however, by common consent that cruelty was afterwards erased from the statutes, and the capital penalty turned into a brand of shame. By adopting the plan of confiscating a debtor's goods, it was sought rather to pour the blood in blushes over his face than to pour it out. How many laws lie hidden out of sight which still require to be reformed! For it is neither the number of their years nor the dignity of their maker that commends them, but simply that they are just; and therefore, when their injustice is recognised, they are deservedly condemned, even though they condemn. Why speak we of them as unjust? nay, if they punish mere names, we may well call them irrational.

But if they punish acts, why in our case do they punish acts

solely on the ground of a name, while in others they must have them proved not from the name, but from the wrong done? I am a practiser of incest (so they say); why do they not inquire into it? I am an infant-killer; why do they not apply the torture to get from me the truth? I am guilty of crimes against the gods, against the Cæsars; why am I, who am able to clear myself, not allowed to be heard on my own behalf? No law forbids the sifting of the crime which it prohibits, for a judge never inflicts a righteous vengeance if he is not well assured that a crime has been committed; nor does a citizen render a true subjection to the law, if he does not know the nature of the thing on which the punishment is inflicted. It is not enough that a law is just, nor that the judge should be convinced of its justice; those from whom obedience is expected should have that conviction too. Nay, a law lies under strong suspicions which does not care to have itself tried and approved: it is a positively wicked law, if, unproved, it tyrannizes over men.

To say a word about the origin of laws of the kind to which we now refer, there was an old decree that no god should be consecrated by the emperor till first approved by the senate. Marcus Æmilius had experience of this in reference to his god Alburnus. And this, too, makes for our case, that among you divinity is allotted at the judgment of human beings. Unless gods give satisfaction to men, there will be no deification for them: the god will have to propitiate the man. Tiberius accordingly, in whose days the Christian name made its entry into the world, having himself received intelligence from Palestine of events which had clearly shown the truth of Christ's divinity, brought the matter before the senate, with his own decision in favour of Christ. The senate, because it had not given the approval itself, rejected his proposal. Cæsar held to his opinion, threatening wrath against all accusers of the Christians.

Consult your histories; you will there find that Nero was the first who assailed with the imperial sword the Christian sect, making progress then especially at Rome. But we glory in having our condemnation hallowed by the hostility of such a wretch. For any one who knows him, can understand that not

except as being of singular excellence did anything bring on it Nero's condemnation. Domitian, too, a man of Nero's type in cruelty, tried his hand at persecution; but as he had something of the human in him, he soon put an end to what he had begun, even restoring again those whom he had banished. Such as these have always been our persecutors,—men unjust, impious, base, of whom even you yourselves have no good to say, the sufferers under whose sentences you have been wont to restore.

But among so many princes from that time to the present day, with anything of divine and human wisdom in them, point out a single persecutor of the Christian name. So far from that, we, on the contrary, bring before you one who was their protector, as you will see by examining the letters of Marcus Aurelius, that most grave of emperors, in which he bears his testimony that that Germanic drought was removed by the rains obtained through the prayers of the Christians who chanced to be fighting under him. And as he did not by public law remove from Christians their legal disabilities, yet in another way he put them openly aside, even adding a sentence of condemnation, and that of greater severity, against their accusers.

What sort of laws are these which the impious alone execute against us—and the unjust, the vile, the bloody, the senseless, the insane?—which Trajan to some extent made naught by forbidding Christians to be sought after; which neither a Hadrian, though fond of searching into all things strange and new, nor a Vespasian, though the subjugator of the Jews, nor a Pius, nor a Verus, ever enforced? It should surely be judged something more natural for bad men to be eradicated by good princes as being their natural enemies, than by those of a spirit kindred with their own.

I would now have these most religious protectors and vindicators of the laws and institutions of their fathers, tell me, in regard to their own fidelity, and the honour and submission themselves show to ancestral institutions, if they have departed from nothing—if they have in nothing gone out of the old paths—if they have not put aside whatsoever is most useful and necessary as rules of a virtuous life.



What has become of the laws repressing expensive and ostentatious ways of living? Which forbade more than a hundred *asses*<sup>1</sup> to be expended on a supper, and more than one fowl to be set on the table at a time, and that not a fatted one; which expelled a patrician from the senate on the serious ground, as it was counted, of aspiring to be too great, because he had acquired ten pounds of silver; which put down the theatres as quickly as they arose to debauch the manners of the people; which did not permit the insignia of official dignities or of noble birth to be rashly or with impunity usurped? For I see the Centenarian suppers must now bear the name, not from the hundred *asses*, but from the hundred *sestertia*<sup>1</sup> expended on them; and that mines of silver are made into dishes (it were little if this applied only to senators, and not to freedmen or even mere whip-spoilers<sup>2</sup>).

I see, too, that neither is a single theatre enough, nor are theatres unsheltered: no doubt it was that immodest pleasure might not be torpid in the winter-time, the Lacedæmonians invented their woollen cloaks for the plays. I see now no difference between the dress of matrons and prostitutes. In regard to women, indeed, those laws of your fathers, which used to be such an encouragement to modesty and sobriety, have also fallen into desuetude, when a woman had yet known no gold upon her save on the finger, which with the bridal ring her husband had sacredly pledged to himself; when the abstinence of women from wine was carried so far, that a matron, for opening the compartments of a wine cellar, was starved to death by her friends,—while in the times of Romulus, for merely tasting wine, Mecenius killed his wife, and suffered nothing for the deed. With reference to this also, it was the custom of women to kiss their relatives, that they might be detected by their breath.

Where is that happiness of married life, ever so desirable, which distinguished our earlier manners, and as the result of which for about 600 years there was not among us a single

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<sup>1</sup> As = cent. Sestertius = 4 cents. Sestertium = 1000 sestertii, about \$40.

<sup>2</sup> Slaves still bearing the marks of the scourge.



divorce? Now, women have every member of the body heavy laden with gold; wine-bibbing is so common among them, that the kiss is never offered with their will; and as for divorce, they long for it as though it were the natural consequence of marriage.

The laws, too, your fathers in their wisdom had enacted concerning the very gods themselves, you their most loyal children have rescinded. The consuls, by the authority of the senate, banished Father Bacchus and his mysteries, not merely from the city, but from the whole of Italy. The consuls Piso and Gabinius, no Christians surely, forbade Serapis, and Isis, and Arpocrates, with their dogheaded friend [Anubis], admission into the Capitol—in the act casting them out from the assembly of gods—overthrew their altars, and expelled them from the country: they were anxious to prevent the vices of their base and lascivious religion from spreading. But you have restored them, and conferred highest honours on them.

What has come of your religion—of the veneration due by you to your ancestors? In your dress, in your food, in your style of life, in your opinions, and last of all in your very speech, you have renounced your progenitors. You are always praising antiquity, and yet every day you have novelties in your way of living. From your having failed to maintain what you should, you make it clear, that while you abandon the good ways of your fathers, you retain and guard the things you ought not. Yet the very tradition of your fathers, which you still seem so faithfully to defend, and in which you find your principal matter of accusation against the Christian—I mean zeal in the worship of the gods, the point in which antiquity has mainly erred—although you have rebuilt the altars of Serapis, now a Roman deity; although to Bacchus, now become a god of Italy, you offer up your orgies,—I shall in its proper place show you despise and neglect, and overthrow, throwing entirely aside the authority of the men of old. I go on meantime to reply to that infamous charge of secret crimes, clearing my way to things of open day.

Monsters of wickedness, we are accused of observing a

holy rite in which we kill a little child and then eat it, in which after the feast we practise incest, the dogs—our pimps, forsooth, overturning the lights and getting us the shamelessness of darkness for our impious lusts. This is what is constantly laid to our charge, and yet you take no pains to elicit the truth of what we have been so long accused. Either bring, then, the matter to the light of day if you believe it, or give it no credit as having never inquired into it. On the ground of your double dealing, we are entitled to lay it down to you that there is no reality in the thing which you dare not expiscate ["fish up"]. You impose on the executioner, in the case of Christians, a duty the very opposite of expiscation: he is not to make them confess what they do, but to make them deny what they are.

We date the origin of our religion, as we have mentioned before, from the reign of Tiberius. Truth and the hatred of truth come into our world together. As soon as truth appears, it is regarded as an enemy. It has as many foes as there are strangers to it: the Jews, as was to be looked for, from a spirit of rivalry; the soldiers, out of a desire to extort money; our very domestics, by their nature. We are daily beset by foes, we are daily betrayed; we are oftentimes surprised in our meetings and congregations. Whoever happened withal upon an infant wailing, according to the common story? Whoever kept for the judge, just as he had found them, the gory mouths of Cyclops and Sirens? Whoever found any traces of uncleanness in their wives? Where is the man who, when he had discovered such atrocities, concealed them; or, in the act of dragging the culprits before the judge, was bribed into silence? If we always keep our secrets, when were our proceedings made known to the world? Nay, by whom could they be made known? Not, surely, by the guilty parties themselves; even from the very idea of the thing, the fealty of silence being ever due to mysteries. The Samothracian and Eleusinian make no disclosures—how much more will silence be kept in regard to such as are sure in their unveiling to call forth punishment from man at once, while wrath divine is kept in store for the future?

If, then, Christians are not themselves the publishers of their crime, it follows of course it must be strangers. And whence have they their knowledge, when it is also a universal custom in religious initiations to keep the profane aloof, and to beware of witnesses, unless it be that those who are so wicked have less fear than their neighbours? Every one knows what sort of thing rumour is. It is one of your own sayings, that "among all evils, none flies so fast as rumour." Why is rumour such an evil thing? Is it because it is fleet? Is it because it carries information? Or is it because it is in the highest degree mendacious? a thing not even when it brings some truth to us without a taint of falsehood, either detracting, or adding, or changing from the simple fact? Nay more, it is the very law of its being to continue only while it lives, and to live but so long as there is no proof; for when the proof is given, it ceases to exist, and, as having done its work of merely spreading a report, it delivers up a fact, and is henceforth held to be a fact, and called a fact. And then no one says, for instance, "They say that it took place at Rome," or, "There is a rumour that he has obtained a province," but "He has got a province," and, "It took place at Rome." Rumour, the very designation of uncertainty, has no place when a thing is certain. Does any but a fool put his trust in it? For a wise man never believes the dubious. Everybody knows, however zealously it is spread abroad, on whatever strength of asseveration it rests, that some time or other from some one fountain it has its origin. Thence it must creep into propagating tongues and ears; and a small seminal blemish so darkens all the rest of the story, that no one can determine whether the lips, from which it first came forth, planted the seed of falsehood, as often happens, from a spirit of opposition, or from a suspicious judgment, or from a confirmed, nay, in the case of some, an inborn, delight in lying. It is well that time brings all to light, as your proverbs and sayings testify, by a provision of nature, which has so appointed things that nothing long is hidden, even though rumour has not disseminated it. It is just then as it should be, that fame for so long a period has been alone aware of the crimes of Christians. This is the witness you bring

against us—one that has never been able to prove the accusation it some time or other sent abroad, and at last by mere continuance made into a settled opinion in the world; so that I confidently appeal to nature herself, ever true, against those who groundlessly hold that such things are to be credited.

See now, we set before you the reward of these enormities. They give promise of eternal life. Hold it meanwhile as your own belief. I ask you, then, whether, so believing, you think it worth attaining with a conscience such as you will have. Come, plunge your knife into the babe, enemy of none, accused of none, child of all; or if that is another's work, simply take your place beside a human being dying before he has really lived, await the departure of the lately given soul, receive the fresh young blood, saturate your bread with it, freely partake. The while as you recline at table, take note of the places which your mother and your sister occupy; mark them well, so that when the dog-made darkness has fallen on you, you may make no mistake, for you will be guilty of a crime—unless you perpetrate a deed of incest. Initiated and sealed into things like these, you have life everlasting. Tell me, I pray you, is eternity worth it? If it is not, then these things are not to be credited. Even although you had the belief, I deny the will; and even if you had the will, I deny the possibility. Why then can others do it, if you cannot? why cannot you, if others can? I suppose we are of a different nature—are we Cynopæ or Sciapodes?<sup>1</sup> You are a man yourself as well as the Christian: if you cannot do it, you ought not to believe it of others. For a Christian is a man as well as you.

But the ignorant, forsooth, are deceived and imposed on. They were quite unaware of anything of the kind being imputed to Christians, or they would certainly have looked into it for themselves, and searched the matter out. Instead of that, it is the custom for persons wishing initiation into sacred rites, I think, to go first of all to the master of them, that he may explain what preparations are to be made. Then, in this case, no doubt he would say, "You must have a child

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<sup>1</sup> Fabulous monsters.



still of tender age, that knows not what it is to die, and can smile under thy knife; bread, too, to collect the gushing blood; in addition to these, candlesticks, and lamps, and dogs—with tit-bits to draw them on to the extinguishing of the lights: above all things, you will require to bring your mother and your sister with you.” But what if mother and sister are unwilling? or if there be neither the one nor the other? What if there are Christians with no Christian relatives? He will not be counted, I suppose, a true follower of Christ, who has not a brother or a son. And what now, if these things are all in store for them without their knowledge? At least afterwards they come to know them; and they bear with them, and pardon them. They fear, it may be said, lest they have to pay for it if they let the secret out: nay, but they will rather in that case have every claim to protection; they will even prefer, one might think, dying by their own hand, to living under the burden of such a dreadful knowledge. Admit that they have this fear; yet why do they still persevere? For it is plain enough that you will have no desire to continue what you would never have been, if you had had previous knowledge of it.

That I may refute more thoroughly these charges, I will show that in part openly, in part secretly, practices prevail among you which have led you perhaps to credit similar things about us. Children were openly sacrificed in Africa to Saturn as lately as the proconsulship of Tiberius, who exposed to public gaze the priests suspended on the sacred trees overshadowing their temple, so many crosses on which the punishment which justice craved overtook their crimes, as the soldiers of our country still can testify who did that very work for that proconsul. And even now that sacred crime still continues to be done in secret. It is not only Christians, you see, who despise you; for all that you do there is neither any crime thoroughly and abidingly eradicated, nor does any of your gods reform his ways. When Saturn did not spare his own children, he was not likely to spare the children of others; whom indeed the very parents themselves were in the habit of offering, gladly responding to the call which was made on them, and keeping the little ones pleased on the oc-



casion, that they might not die in tears. At the same time, there is a vast difference between homicide and parricide. A more advanced age was sacrificed to Mercury in Gaul. I hand over the Tauric fables to their own theatres. Why, even in that most religious city of the pious descendants of Æneas, there is a certain Jupiter whom in their games they lave with human blood. It is the blood of a beast-fighter, you say. Is it less, because of that, the blood of a man? Or is it viler blood because it is from the veins of a wicked man? At any rate it is shed in murder. O Jove, thyself a Christian, and in truth only son of thy father in his cruelty!

But in regard to child-murder, as it does not matter whether it is committed for a sacred object, or merely at one's own self-impulse—although there is a great difference, as we have said, between parricide and homicide—I shall turn to the people generally. How many, think you, of those crowding around and gaping for Christian blood,—how many even of your rulers, notable for their justice to you and for their severe measures against us, may I charge in their own consciences with the sin of putting their offspring to death? As to any difference in the kind of murder, it is certainly the more cruel way to kill by drowning, or by exposure to cold and hunger and dogs. A maturer age has always preferred death by the sword. In our case, murder being once for all forbidden, we may not destroy even the foetus in the womb, while as yet the human being derives blood from other parts of the body for its sustenance. To hinder a birth is merely a speedier man-killing; nor does it matter whether you take away a life that is born, or destroy one that is coming to the birth. That is a man which is going to be one; you have the fruit already in its seed.

As to meals of blood and such tragic dishes, read—I am not sure where it is told (it is in Herodotus, I think)—how blood taken from the arms, and tasted by both parties, has been the treaty bond among some nations. I am not sure what it was that was tasted in the time of Catiline. They say, too, that among some Scythian tribes the dead are eaten by their friends. But I am going far from home. At this day, among ourselves, blood consecrated to Bellona, blood

drawn from a punctured thigh and then partaken of, seals initiation into the rites of that goddess. Those, too, who at the gladiator shows, for the cure of epilepsy, quaff with greedy thirst the blood of criminals slain in the arena, as it flows fresh from the wound, and then rush off—to whom do they belong? those, also, who make meals on the flesh of wild beasts at the place of combat—who have keen appetites for bear and stag? That bear in the struggle was bedewed with the blood of the man whom it lacerated: that stag rolled itself in the gladiator's gore. The entrails of the very bears, loaded with as yet undigested human viscera, are in great request. And you have men rifting up man-fed flesh? If you partake of food like this, how do your repasts differ from those you accuse us Christians of?

And do those, who, with savage lust, seize on human bodies, do less because they devour the living? Have they less the pollution of human blood on them because they only lick up what is to turn into blood? They make meals, it is plain, not so much of infants, as of grown-up men. Blush for your vile ways before the Christians, who have not even the blood of animals at their meals of simple and natural food; who abstain from things strangled and that die a natural death, for no other reason than that they may not contract pollution, so much as from blood secreted in the viscera. To clench the matter with a single example, you tempt Christians with sausages of blood, just because you are perfectly aware that the thing by which you thus try to get them to transgress they hold unlawful. And how unreasonable it is to believe that those, of whom you are convinced that they regard with horror the idea of tasting the blood of oxen, are eager after blood of men; unless, mayhap, you have tried it, and found it sweeter to the taste! Nay, in fact, there is here a test you should apply to discover Christians, as well as the fire-pan and the censer. They should be proved by their appetite for human blood, as well as by their refusal to offer sacrifice, just as otherwise they should be affirmed to be free of Christianity by their refusal to taste of blood, as by their sacrificing; and there would be no want of blood of men, amply supplied as that would be in the trial and condemnation of prisoners.

Then who are more given to the crime of incest than those who have enjoyed the instruction of Jupiter himself? Ctesias tells us that the Persians have illicit intercourse with their mothers. The Macedonians, too, are suspected on this point; for on first hearing the tragedy of *Œdipus* they made mirth of the incest-doer's grief. Even now reflect what opportunity there is for mistakes leading to incestuous comminglings—your promiscuous looseness supplying the materials. You first of all expose your children, that they may be taken up by any compassionate passer-by, to whom they are quite unknown; or you give them away, to be adopted by those who will do better to them the part of parents. Well, some time or other, all memory of the alienated progeny must be lost; and when once a mistake has been made, the transmission of incest thence will still go on—the race and the crime creeping on together. Then, further, wherever you are—at home, abroad, over the seas—your lust is an attendant, whose general indulgence, or even its indulgence in the most limited scale, may easily and unwittingly anywhere beget children, so that in this way a progeny scattered about in the commerce of life may have intercourse with those who are their own kin, and have no notion that there is any incest in the case. A persevering and stedfast chastity has protected us from anything like this: keeping as we do from adulteries and all post-matrimonial unfaithfulness, we are not exposed to incestuous mishaps. Some of us, making matters still more secure, beat away from them entirely the power of sensual sin, by a virgin continence, still boys in this respect when they are old.

If you would but take notice that such sins as I have mentioned prevail among you, that would lead you to see that they have no existence among Christians. The same eyes would tell you of both facts. But the two blindnesses are apt to go together; so that those who do not see what is, think they see what is not. I shall show it to be so in everything. But now let me speak of matters which are more clear.

“You do not worship the gods,” you say; “and you do not offer sacrifices for their emperors.” Well, we do not offer sacrifice for others, for the same reason that we do not for

ourselves,—namely, that your gods are not at all the objects of our worship. So we are accused of sacrilege and treason. This is the chief ground of charge against us—nay, it is the sum-total of our offending; and it is worthy then of being inquired into, if neither prejudice nor injustice be the judge, the one of which has no idea of discovering the truth, and the other simply and at once rejects it. We do not worship your gods, because we know that there are no such beings. This, therefore, is what you should do: you should call on us to demonstrate their non-existence, and thereby prove that they have no claim to adoration; for only if your gods were truly so, would there be any obligation to render divine homage to them. And punishment even were due to Christians, if it were made plain that those to whom they refused all worship were indeed divine.

But you say, They are gods. We protest and appeal from yourselves to your knowledge; let that judge us; let that condemn us, if it can deny that all these gods of yours were but men. If even it venture to deny that, it will be confuted by its own books of antiquities, from which it has got its information about them, bearing witness to this day, as they plainly do, both of the cities in which they were born, and the countries in which they have left traces of their exploits, as well as where also they are proved to have been buried.

Shall I now, therefore, go over them one by one, so numerous and so various, new and old, barbarian, Grecian, Roman, foreign, captive and adopted, private and common, male and female, rural and urban, naval and military? It were useless even to hunt out all their names: so I may content myself with a compend; and this not for your information, but that you may have what you know brought to your recollection. For undoubtedly you act as if you had forgotten all about them. No one of your gods is earlier than Saturn: from him you trace all your deities, even those of higher rank and better known. What, then, can be proved of the first, will apply to those that follow. So far, then, as books give us information, neither the Greek Diodorus or Thallus, neither Cassius Severus or Cornelius Nepos, nor any writer upon sacred antiquities, have ventured to say that Saturn



was any but a man: so far as the question depends on facts, I find none more trustworthy than those—that in Italy itself we have the country in which, after many expeditions, and after having partaken of Attic hospitalities, Saturn settled, obtaining cordial welcome from Janus, or, as the Salii will have it, Janis. The mountain on which he dwelled was called Saturnius; the city he founded is called Saturnia to this day; last of all, the whole of Italy, after having borne the name of Oenotria, was called Saturnia from him. He first gave you the art of writing, and a stamped coinage, and thence it is he presides over the public treasury. But if Saturn were a man, he had undoubtedly a human origin; and having a human origin, he was not the offspring of heaven and earth. As his parents were unknown, it was not unnatural that he should be spoken of as the son of those elements from which we might all seem to spring. For who does not speak of heaven and earth as father and mother, in a sort of way of veneration and honour? or from the custom which prevails among us of saying that persons of whom we have no knowledge, or who make a sudden appearance, have fallen from the skies? In this way it came about that Saturn, everywhere a sudden and unlooked-for guest, got everywhere the name of the Heaven-born. For even the common folk call persons whose stock is unknown, sons of earth. I say nothing of how men in these rude times were wont to act, when they were impressed by the look of any stranger happening to appear among them, as though it were divine, since even at this day men of culture make gods of those whom, a day or two before, they acknowledged to be dead men by their public mourning for them. Let these notices of Saturn, brief as they are, suffice. It will thus also be proved that Jupiter is as certainly a man as from a man he sprung; and that one after another the whole swarm is mortal like the primal stock.

And since, as you dare not deny that these deities of yours once were men, you have taken it on you to assert that they were made gods after their decease, let us consider what necessity there was for this. In the first place, you must concede the existence of one higher God—a certain wholesale dealer in divinity, who has made gods of men.



For they could neither have assumed a divinity which was not theirs, nor could any but one himself possessing it have conferred it on them. If there was no one to make gods, it is vain to dream of gods being made when thus you have no god-maker. Most certainly, if they could have deified themselves, with a higher state at their command, they never would have been men. If, then, there be one who is able to make gods, I turn back to an examination of any reason there may be for making gods at all; and I find no other reason than this, that the great God has need of their ministrations and aids in performing the offices of Deity. But first it is an unworthy idea that He should need the help of a man, and in fact a dead man, when, if He was to be in want of this assistance from the dead, He might more fittingly have created some one a god at the beginning.

Nor do I see any place for his action. For this entire world-mass—whether self-existent and uncreated, as Pythagoras maintains, or brought into being by a creator's hands, as Plato holds—was manifestly, once for all, in its original construction disposed, and furnished, and ordered, and supplied with a government of perfect wisdom. That cannot be imperfect which was made all perfect. There was nothing waiting on for Saturn and his race to do. Men will make fools of themselves if they refuse to believe that from the very first rain poured down from the sky, and stars gleamed, and light shone, and thunders roared, and Jove himself dreaded the lightnings you put in his hands; that in like manner before Bacchus, and Ceres, and Minerva, nay, before the first man, whoever that was, every kind of fruit burst forth plentifully from the bosom of the earth, for nothing provided for the support and sustenance of man could be introduced after his entrance on the stage of being. Accordingly, these necessities of life are said to have been discovered, not created. But the thing you discover existed before; and that which had a pre-existence must be regarded as belonging not to him who discovered it, but to him who made it. For of course it had a being before it could be found. But if, on account of his being the discoverer of the vine, Bacchus is raised to godship, Lucullus, who first introduced the cherry

from Pontus into Italy, has not been fairly dealt with; for as the discoverer of a new fruit, he has not, as though he were its creator, been awarded divine honours. Wherefore, if the universe existed from the beginning, thoroughly furnished, with its system working under certain laws for the performance of its functions, there is in this respect an entire absence of all reason for electing humanity to divinity; for the positions and powers which you have assigned to your deities have been from the beginning precisely what they would have been, although you had never deified them.

But you turn to another reason, telling us that the conferring of deity was a way of rewarding worth. And hence you grant, I conclude, that the god-making God is of transcendent righteousness,—one who will neither rashly, nor improperly, nor needlessly bestow a reward so great. I would have you then consider whether the merits of your deities are of a kind to have raised them to the heavens, and not rather to have sunk them down into the lowest depths of Tartarus,—the place which you regard, with many, as the prison-house of infernal punishments. For into this dread place are wont to be cast all who offend against filial piety, and such as are guilty of incest with sisters, and seducers of wives, and ravishers of virgins, and boy-polluters, and men of furious tempers, and murderers, and thieves, and deceivers; all, in short, who tread in the footsteps of your gods, not one of whom you can prove free from crime or vice, save by denying that they had ever a human existence. But as you cannot deny that, you have those foul blots also as an added reason for not believing that they were made gods afterwards. For if you rule for the very purpose of punishing such deeds; if every virtuous man among you rejects all correspondence, and converse, and intimacy with the wicked and the base, while, on the other hand, the high God has taken up their mates to a share of His majesty, on what grounds is it that you thus condemn those whose fellow-actors you adore?

Your goodness is an affront in the heavens. Deify your vilest criminals, if you would please your gods. You honour them by giving divine honours to their fellows. But to say no more about a way of acting so unworthy, there have been

men virtuous, and pure, and good. Yet how many of these nobler men you have left in the regions of doom! as Socrates, so renowned for his wisdom, Aristides for his justice, Themistocles for his warlike genius, Alexander for his sublimity of soul, Polycrates for his good fortune, Cræsus for his wealth, Demosthenes for his eloquence. Which of these gods of yours is more remarkable for gravity and wisdom than Cato, more just and warlike than Scipio? which of them more magnanimous than Pompey, more prosperous than Sylla, of greater wealth than Crassus, more eloquent than Tully? How much better it would have been for the God Supreme to wait, that He might have taken such men as these to be His heavenly associates, prescient as He must have surely been of their worthier character! He was in a hurry, I suppose, and straightway shut heaven's gates; and now He must surely feel ashamed at these worthies murmuring over their lot in the regions below.

But I pass from these remarks, for I know and I am going to show what your gods are not, by showing what they are. In reference, then, to these, I see only names of dead men of ancient times; I hear fabulous stories; I recognise sacred rites founded on mere myths. As to the actual images, I regard them as simply pieces of matter akin to the vessels and utensils in common use among us, or even undergoing in their consecration a hapless change from these useful articles at the hands of reckless art, which in the transforming process treats them with utter contempt, nay, in the very act commits sacrilege; so that it might be no slight solace to us in all our punishments, suffering as we do because of these same gods, that in their making they suffer as we do themselves. You put Christians on crosses and stakes: what image is not formed from the clay in the first instance, set on cross and stake? The body of your god is first consecrated on the gibbet. You tear the sides of Christians with your claws; but in the case of your own gods, axes, and planes, and rasps are put to work more vigorously on every member of the body. We lay our heads upon the block; before the lead, and the glue, and the nails are put in requisition, your deities are headless. We are cast to the wild beasts, while

you attach them to Bacchus, and Cybele, and Cælestis. We are burned in the flames; so, too, are they in their original lump. We are condemned to the mines; from these your gods originate. We are banished to islands; in islands it is a common thing for your gods to have their birth or die. If it is in this way a deity is made, it will follow that as many as are punished are deified, and tortures will have to be declared divinities. But plain it is these objects of your worship have no sense of the injuries and disgraces of their consecrating, as they are equally unconscious of the honours paid to them.

O impious words! O blasphemous reproaches! Gnash your teeth upon us—foam with maddened rage against us—ye are the persons, no doubt, who censured a certain Seneca speaking of your superstition at much greater length, and far more sharply! In a word, if we refuse our homage to statues and frigid images, the very counterpart of their dead originals, with which hawks, and mice, and spiders are so well acquainted, does it not merit praise instead of penalty, that we have rejected what we have come to see is error? We cannot surely be made out to injure those who we are certain are nonentities. What does not exist, is in its non-existence secure from suffering.

“But they are gods to us,” you say. And how is it, then, that in utter inconsistency with this, you are convicted of impious, and sacrilegious, and irreligious conduct to them, neglecting those you imagine to exist, destroying those who are the objects of your fear, making mock of those whose honour you avenge? See now if I go beyond the truth. First, indeed, seeing you worship, some one god, and some another, of course you give offence to those you do not worship. You cannot continue to give preference to one without slighting another, for selection implies rejection. You despise, therefore, those whom you thus reject; for in your rejection of them, it is plain you have no dread of giving them offence. For, as we have already shown, every god depended on the decision of the senate for his godhead. No god was he whom man in his own counsels did not wish to be so, and thereby condemned. The family deities you call Lares, you exercise



a domestic authority over, pledging them, selling them, changing them—making sometimes a cooking-pot of a Saturn, a firepan of a Minerva, as one or other happens to be worn done, or broken in its long sacred use, or as the family head feels the pressure of some more sacred home necessity.

In like manner, by public law you disgrace your state gods, putting them in the auction-catalogue, and making them a source of revenue. Men seek to get the Capitol, as they seek to get the herb market, under the voice of the crier, under the auction spear, under the registration of the quæstor. Deity is struck off and farmed out to the highest bidder. But indeed lands burdened with tribute are of less value; men under the assessment of a poll-tax are less noble; for these things are the marks of servitude. In the case of the gods, on the other hand, the sacredness is great in proportion to the tribute which they yield; nay, the more sacred is a god, the larger is the tax he pays. Majesty is made a source of gain. Religion goes about the taverns begging. You demand a price for the privilege of standing on temple ground, for access to the sacred services; there is no gratis knowledge of your divinities permitted—you must buy their favours with a price. What honours in any way do you render to them that you do not render to the dead? You have temples in the one case just as in the other; you have altars in the one case as in the other. Their statues have the same dress, the same insignia. As the dead man had his age, his art, his occupation, so is it with the deity. In what respect does the funeral feast differ from the feast of Jupiter? or the bowl of the gods from the ladle of the manes? or the undertaker from the soothsayer, as in fact this latter personage also attends upon the dead?

With perfect propriety you give divine honours to your departed emperors, as you worship them in life. The gods will count themselves indebted to you; nay, it will be matter of high rejoicing among them that their masters are made their equals. But when you adore Larentina, a public prostitute—I could have wished that it might at least have been Lais or Phryne—among your Junos, and Cereses, and Dianas; when you instal in your Pantheon Simon Magus, giv-



ing him a statue and the title of Holy God; when you make an infamous court page a god of the sacred synod, although your ancient deities are in reality no better, they will still think themselves affronted by you, that the privilege antiquity conferred on them alone, has been allowed to others.

I wish now to review your sacred rites; and I pass no censure on your sacrificing, when you offer the worn-out, the scabbed, the corrupting; when you cut off from the fat and the sound the useless parts, such as the head and the hoofs, which in your house you would have assigned to the slaves or the dogs; when of the tithe of Hercules you do not lay a third upon his altar (I am disposed rather to praise your wisdom in rescuing something from being lost); but turning to your books, from which you get your training in wisdom and the nobler duties of life, what utterly ridiculous things I find!—that for Trojans and Greeks the gods fought among themselves like pairs of gladiators; that Venus was wounded by a man, because she would rescue her son Æneas when he was in peril of his life from the same Diomedes; that Mars was almost wasted away by a thirteen months' imprisonment; that Jupiter was saved by a monster's aid from suffering the same violence at the hands of the other gods; that he now laments the fate of Sarpedon, now foully makes love to his own sister, recounting to her former mistresses, now for a long time past not so dear as she.

After this, what poet is not found copying the example of his chief, to be a disgracer of the gods? One gives Apollo to king Admetus to tend his sheep; another hires out the building labours of Neptune to Laomedon. A well-known lyric poet, too—Pindar, I mean—sings of Æsculapius deservedly stricken with lightning for his greed in practising wrongfully his art. A wicked deed it was of Jupiter—if he hurled the bolt—unnatural to his grandson, and exhibiting envious feeling to the Physician. Things like these should not be made public if they are true; and if false, they should not be fabricated among people professing a great respect for religion.

Nor indeed do either tragic or comic writers shrink from setting forth the gods as the origin of all family calamities

and sins. I do not dwell on the philosophers, contenting myself with a reference to Socrates, who, in contempt of the gods, was in the habit of swearing by an oak, and a goat, and a dog. In fact, for this very thing Socrates was condemned to death, that he overthrew the worship of the gods. Plainly, at one time as well as another, that is, always truth disliked. However, when rueing their judgment, the Athenians inflicted punishment on his accusers, and set up a golden image of him in a temple, the condemnation was in the very act rescinded, and his witness was restored to its former value. Diogenes, too, makes utter mock of Hercules; and the Roman cynic Varro brings forward three hundred Joves, or Jupiters they should be called, all headless.

Others of your writers, in their wantonness, even minister to your pleasures by vilifying the gods. Examine those charming farces of your Lentuli and Hostilii, whether in the jokes and tricks it is the buffoons or the deities which afford your merriment; such farces I mean as Anubis the Adulterer, and Luna of the masculine gender, and Diana under the lash, and the reading the will of Jupiter deceased, and the three famishing Herculese held up to ridicule. Your dramatic literature, too, depicts all the vileness of your gods. The Sun mourns his offspring [Phaethon] cast down from heaven, and you are full of glee; Cybele sighs after the scornful swain, [Attis], and you do not blush; you brook the stage recital of Jupiter's misdeeds, and the shepherd [Paris] judging Juno, Venus, and Minerva.

Then, again, when the likeness of a god is put on the head of an ignominious and infamous wretch, when one impure and trained up for the art in all effeminacy, represents a Minerva or a Hercules, is not the majesty of your gods insulted, and their deity dishonoured? Yet you not merely look on, but applaud. You are, I suppose, more devout in the arena, where after the same fashion your deities dance on human blood, on the pollutions caused by inflicted punishments, as they act their themes and stories, doing their turn for the wretched criminals, except that these, too, often put on divinity and actually play the very gods. We have seen in our day a representation of the mutilation of Attis, that

famous god of Pessinus, and a man burnt alive as Hercules. We have made merry amid the ludicrous cruelties of the noon-day exhibition, at Mercury examining the bodies of the dead with his hot iron; we have witnessed Jove's brother [Pluto], mallet in hand, dragging out the corpses of the gladiators. But who can go into everything of this sort? If by such things as these the honour of deity is assailed, if they go to blot out every trace of its majesty, we must explain them by the contempt in which the gods are held, alike by those who actually do them, and by those for whose enjoyment they are done.

This it will be said, however, is all in sport. But if I add—it is what all know and will admit as readily to be the fact—that in the temples adulteries are arranged, that at the altars pimping is practised, that often in the houses of the temple-keepers and priests, under the sacrificial fillets, and the sacred hats, and the purple robes, amid the fumes of incense, deeds of licentiousness are done, I am not sure but your gods have more reason to complain of you than of Christians. It is certainly among the votaries of your religion that the perpetrators of sacrilege are always found. For Christians do not enter your temples even in the day-time. Perhaps they too would be spoilers of them, if they worshipped in them. What then do they worship, since their objects of worship are different from yours? Already indeed it is implied as the corollary from their rejection of the lie, that they render homage to the truth; nor continue longer in an error which they have given up in the very fact of recognising it to be an error. Take this in first of all, and when we have offered a preliminary refutation of some false opinions, go on to derive from it our entire religious system.

For, like some others, you are under the delusion that our god is an ass's head. Cornelius Tacitus first put this notion into people's minds. In the fifth book of his histories, beginning the narrative of the Jewish war with an account of the origin of the nation; and theorizing at his pleasure about the origin, as well as the name and the religion of the Jews, he states that having been delivered, or rather, in his opinion, expelled from Egypt, in crossing the vast plains of Arabia,

where water is so scanty, they were in extremity from thirst; but taking the guidance of the wild asses, which it was thought might be seeking water after feeding, they discovered a fountain, and thereupon in their gratitude they consecrated a head of this species of animal. And as Christianity is nearly allied to Judaism, from this, I suppose, it was taken for granted that we too are devoted to the worship of the same image. But the said Cornelius Tacitus (the very opposite of *tacit* [silent] in telling lies) informs us in the work already mentioned, that when Cneius Pompeius captured Jerusalem, he entered the temple to see the arcana of the Jewish religion, but found no image there. Yet surely if worship was rendered to any visible object, the very place for its exhibition would be the shrine; and that all the more that the worship, however unreasonable, had no need there to fear outside beholders. For entrance to the holy place was permitted to the priests alone, while all vision was forbidden to others by an outspread curtain. You will not, however, deny that all beasts of burden, and not parts of them, but the animals entire, are with their goddess Epona objects of worship with you. It is this perhaps which displeases you in us, that while your worship here is universal, we do homage only to the ass.

Then, if any of you think we render superstitious adoration to the cross, in that adoration he is sharer with us. If you offer homage to a piece of wood at all, it matters little what it is like when the substance is the same: it is of no consequence the form, if you have the very body of the god. And yet how far does the Athenian Pallas differ from the stock of the cross, or the Pharian Ceres as she is put up uncarved to sale, a mere rough stake and piece of shapeless wood! Every stake fixed in an upright position is a portion of the cross; we render our adoration, if you will have it so, to a god entire and complete. We have shown before that your deities are derived from shapes modelled from the cross. But you also worship victories, for in your trophies the cross is the heart of the trophy. The camp religion of the Romans is all through a worship of the standards, a setting the standards above all gods. Well, all those images decking out the



standards are ornaments of crosses. All those hangings of your standards and banners are robes of crosses. I praise your zeal: you would not consecrate crosses unclothed and unadorned.

Others, again, certainly with more information and greater verisimilitude, believe that the sun is our god. We shall be counted Persians perhaps, though we do not worship the orb of day painted on a piece of linen cloth, having himself everywhere in his own disk. The idea no doubt has originated from our being known to turn to the east in prayer. But you, many of you, also, under pretence sometimes of worshipping the heavenly bodies, move your lips in the direction of the sunrise. In the same way, if we devote Sun-day to rejoicing, from a far different reason than Sun-worship, we have some resemblance to those of you who devote the day of Saturn to ease and luxury, though they too go far away from Jewish ways, of which indeed they are ignorant.

But lately a new edition of our god has been given to the world in that great city: it originated with a certain vile man who was wont to hire himself out to cheat the wild beasts, and who exhibited a picture with this inscription: THE GOD OF THE CHRISTIANS, BORN OF AN ASS. He had the ears of an ass, was hooped in one foot, carried a book,<sup>1</sup> and wore a toga. Both the name and the figure gave us amusement. But our opponents ought straightway to have done homage to this biformed divinity, for they have acknowledged gods dog-headed and lion-headed, with horn of buck and ram, with goat-like lions, with serpent legs, with wings sprouting from back or foot. These things we have discussed *ex abundanti* [copiously], that we might not seem willingly to pass by any rumour against us unrefuted. Having thoroughly cleared ourselves, we turn now to an exhibition of what our religion really is.

The object of our worship is the One God, He who by His commanding word, His arranging wisdom, His mighty power, brought forth from nothing this entire mass of our

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<sup>1</sup> Referring evidently to the Scriptures; and showing what the Bible was to the early Christians.



world, with all its array of elements, bodies, spirits, for the glory of His majesty; whence also the Greeks have bestowed on it the name of *Kosmos* [Universal Order]. The eye cannot see Him, though He is (spiritually) visible. He is incomprehensible, though in grace He is manifested. He is beyond our utmost thought, though our human faculties conceive of Him. He is therefore equally real and great. But that which, in the ordinary sense, can be seen and handled and conceived, is inferior to the eyes by which it is taken in, and the hands by which it is tainted, and the faculties by which it is discovered; but that which is infinite is known only to itself. This it is which gives some notion of God, while yet beyond all our conceptions—our very incapacity of fully grasping Him affords us the idea of what He really is. He is presented to our minds in His transcendent greatness, as at once known and unknown.

And this is the crowning guilt of men, that they will not recognise One, of whom they cannot possibly be ignorant. Would you have the proof from the works of His hands, so numerous and so great, which both contain you and sustain you, which minister at once to your enjoyment, and strike you with awe; or would you rather have it from the testimony of the soul itself? Though under the oppressive bondage of the body, though led astray by depraving customs, though enervated by lusts and passions, though in slavery to false gods; yet, whenever the soul comes to itself, as out of a surfeit, or a sleep, or a sickness, and attains something of its natural soundness, it speaks of God; using no other word, because this is the peculiar name of the true God. "God is great and good"—"Which may God give," are the words on every lip. It bears witness, too, that God is judge, exclaiming, "God sees," and, "I commend myself to God," and, "God will repay me." O noble testimony of the soul by nature Christian! Then, too, in using such words as these, it looks not to the Capitol, but to the heavens. It knows that there is the throne of the living God, as from Him and from thence itself came down.

But, that we might attain an ampler and more authoritative knowledge at once of Himself, and of His counsels and

will, God has added a written revelation for the behoof of every one whose heart is set on seeking Him, that seeking he may find, and finding believe, and believing obey. For from the first He sent messengers into the world,—men whose stainless righteousness made them worthy to know the Most High, and to reveal Him,—men abundantly endowed with the Holy Spirit, that they might proclaim that there is one God only who made all things, who formed man from the dust of the ground (for He is the true Prometheus who gave order to the world by arranging the seasons and their course),—who have further set before us the proofs He has given of His majesty in His judgments by floods and fires, the rules appointed by Him for securing His favour, as well as the retribution in store for the ignoring and forsaking and keeping them, as being about at the end of all to adjudge His worshippers to everlasting life, and the wicked to the doom of fire at once without ending and without break, raising up again all the dead from the beginning, reforming and renewing them with the object of awarding either recompense.

Once these things were with us, too, the theme of ridicule. We are of your stock and nature: men are made, not born, Christians. The preachers of whom we have spoken are called prophets, from the office which belongs to them of predicting the future. Their words, as well as the miracles which they performed, that men might have faith in their divine authority, we have still in the literary treasures they have left, and which are open to all. Ptolemy, surnamed Philadelphus, the most learned of his race, a man of vast acquaintance with all literature, emulating, I imagine, the book enthusiasm of Pisistratus, among other remains of the past which either their antiquity or something of peculiar interest made famous, at the suggestion of Demetrius Phalereus, who was renowned above all grammarians of his time, and to whom he had committed the management of these things, applied to the Jews for their writings—I mean the writings peculiar to them and in their tongue, which they alone possessed. For from themselves, as a people dear to God for their fathers' sake, their prophets had ever sprung, and to them they had ever spoken. Now in ancient times the people

we call Jews bare the name of Hebrews, and so both their writings and their speech were Hebrew. But that the understanding of their books might not be wanting, this also the Jews supplied to Ptolemy; for they gave him seventy-two interpreters—men whom the philosopher Menedemus, the well-known assertor of a Providence, regarded with respect as sharing in his views. The same account is given by Aristæus. So the king left these works unlocked to all, in the Greek language. To this day, at the temple of Serapis, the libraries of Ptolemy are to be seen, with the identical Hebrew originals in them. The Jews, too, read them publicly. Under a tribute-liberty, they are in the habit of going to hear them every Sabbath. Whoever gives ear will find God in them; whoever takes pains to understand, will be compelled to believe.

Their high antiquity, first of all, claims authority for these writings. With you, too, it is a kind of religion to demand belief on this very ground. Well, all the substances, all the materials, the origins, classes, contents of your most ancient writings, even most nations and cities illustrious in the records of the past and noted for their antiquity in books of annals,—the very forms of your letters, those revealers and custodiers of events, nay (I think I speak still within the mark), your very gods themselves, your very temples and oracles, and sacred rites, are less ancient than the work of a single prophet, in whom you have the *thesaurus* of the entire Jewish religion, and therefore too of ours. If you happen to have heard of a certain Moses, I speak first of him: he is as far back as the Argive Inachus; by nearly four hundred years—only seven less—he precedes Danaus, your most ancient name, while he antedates by a millennium the death of Priam. I might affirm, too, that he is five hundred years earlier than Homer, and have supporters of that view. The other prophets also, though of later date, are even the most recent of them as far back as the first of your philosophers, and legislators, and historians.

It is not so much the difficulty of the subject, as its vastness, that stands in the way of a statement of the grounds on which these statements rest; the matter is not so arduous

as it would be tedious. It would require the anxious study of many books, and the fingers' busy reckoning. The histories of the most ancient nations, such as the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, the Phœnicians, would need to be ransacked; the men of these various nations who have information to give, would have to be called in as witnesses. Manetho the Egyptian, and Berosus the Chaldean, and Iromus the Phœnician king of Tyre; their successors too, Ptolemy the Mendesian, and Demetrius Phalereus, and King Juba, and Apion, and Thallus, and their critic the Jew Josephus, the native vindicator of the ancient history of his people, who either authenticates or refutes the others. Also the Greek censors' lists must be compared, and the dates of events ascertained, that the chronological connections may be opened up, and thus the reckonings of the various annals be made to give forth light. We must go abroad into the histories and literature of all nations. And, in fact, we have already brought the proof in part before you, in giving those hints as to how it is to be effected. But it seems better to delay the full discussion of this, lest in our haste we do not sufficiently carry it out, or lest in its thorough handling we make too lengthened a digression.

To make up for our delay in this, we bring under your notice something of even greater importance; we point to the majesty of our Scriptures, if not to their antiquity. If you doubt that they are as ancient as we say, we offer proof that they are divine. And you may convince yourselves of this at once, and without going very far. Your instructors, the world, and the age, and the event, are all before you. All that is taking place around you was fore-announced; all that you now see with your eye was previously heard by the ear. The swallowing up of cities by the earth; the theft of islands by the sea; wars, bringing external and internal convulsions; the collision of kingdoms with kingdoms; famines and pestilences, and local massacres, and widespread desolating mortalities; the exaltation of the lowly, and the humbling of the proud; the decay of righteousness, the growth of sin, the slackening interest in all good ways; the very seasons and elements going out of their ordinary course, monsters and



portents taking the place of nature's forms—it was all foreseen and predicted before it came to pass. While we suffer the calamities, we read of them in the Scriptures; as we examine, they are proved. Well, the truth of a prophecy, I think, is the demonstration of its being from above. Hence there is among us an assured faith in regard to coming events as things already proved to us, for they were predicted along with what we have day by day fulfilled. They are uttered by the same voices, they are written in the same books—the same Spirit inspires them. All time is one to prophecy foretelling the future. Among men, it may be, a distinction of times is made while the fulfillment is going on: from being future we think of it as present, and then from being present we count it as belonging to the past. How are we to blame, I pray you, that we believe in things to come as though they already were, with the grounds we have for our faith in these two steps?

But having asserted that our religion is supported by the writings of the Jews, the oldest which exist, though it is generally known, and we fully admit that it dates from a comparatively recent period—no further back indeed than the reign of Tiberius—a question may perhaps be raised on this ground about its standing, as if it were hiding something of its presumption under shadow of an illustrious religion, one which has at any rate undoubted allowance of the law, or because, apart from the question of age, we neither accord with the Jews in their peculiarities in regard to food, nor in the sacred days, nor even in their well-known bodily sign, nor in the possession of a common name, which surely behoved to be the case if we did homage to the same God as they.

Then, too, the common people have now some knowledge of Christ, and think of Him as but a man, one indeed such as the Jews condemned, so that some may naturally enough have taken up the idea that we are worshippers of a mere human being. But we are neither ashamed of Christ—for we rejoice to be counted His disciples, and in His name to suffer—nor do we differ from the Jews concerning God. We must make, therefore, a remark or two as to Christ's divinity.



In former times the Jews enjoyed much of God's favour, when the fathers of their race were noted for their righteousness and faith. So it was that as a people they flourished greatly, and their kingdom attained to a lofty eminence; and so highly blessed were they, that for their instruction God spake to them in special revelations, pointing out to them beforehand how they should merit His favour and avoid His displeasure. But how deeply they have sinned, puffed up to their fall with a false trust in their noble ancestors, turning from God's way into a way of sheer impiety, though they themselves should refuse to admit it, their present national ruin would afford sufficient proof. Scattered abroad, a race of wanderers, exiles from their own land and clime, they roam over the whole world without either a human or a heavenly king, not possessing even the stranger's right to set so much as a simple footstep in their native country.

The sacred writers withal, in giving previous warning of these things, all with equal clearness ever declared that, in the last days of the world, God would, out of every nation, and people, and country, choose for Himself more faithful worshippers, upon whom He would bestow His grace, and that indeed in ampler measure, in keeping with the enlarged capacities of a nobler dispensation. Accordingly, He appeared among us, whose coming to renovate and illuminate man's nature was pre-announced by God—I mean Christ, that Son of God. And so the supreme Head and Master of this grace and discipline, the Enlightener and Trainer of the human race, God's own Son, was announced among us, born—but not so born as to make Him ashamed of the name of Son or of His paternal origin. It was not His lot to have as His father, by incest with a sister, or by violation of a daughter or another's wife, a god in the shape of serpent, or ox, or bird, or lover, for his vile ends transmuting himself into the gold of Danaus. They are your divinities upon whom these base deeds of Jupiter were done. But the Son of God has no mother in any sense which involves impurity; she whom men suppose to be His mother in the ordinary way, had never entered into the marriage bond.

But, first, I shall discuss His essential nature, and so the

nature of His birth will be understood. We have already asserted that God made the world, and all which it contains, by His Word, and Reason, and Power. It is abundantly plain that your philosophers, too, regard the Logos—that is, the Word and Reason—as the Creator of the universe. For Zeno lays it down that he is the creator, having made all things according to a determinate plan; that his name is Fate, and God, and the soul of Jupiter, and the necessity of all things. Cleanthes ascribes all this to spirit, which he maintains pervades the universe. And we, in like manner, hold that the Word, and Reason, and Power, by which we have said God made all, have spirit as their proper and essential substratum, in which the Word has inbeing to give forth utterances, and reason abides to dispose and arrange, and power is over all to execute. We have been taught that He proceeds forth from God, and in that procession He is generated; so that He is the Son of God, and is called God from unity of substance with God. For God, too, is a Spirit. Even when the ray is shot from the sun, it is still part of the parent mass; the sun will still be in the ray, because it is a ray of the sun—there is no division of substance, but merely an extension. Thus Christ is Spirit of Spirit, and God of God, as light of light is kindled. The material matrix remains entire and unimpaired, though you derive from it any number of shoots possessed of its qualities; so, too, that which has come forth out of God is at once God and the Son of God, and the two are one. In this way also, as He is Spirit of Spirit and God of God, He is made a second in manner of existence—in position, not in nature; and He did not withdraw from the original source, but went forth.

This ray of God, then, as it was always foretold in ancient times, descending into a certain virgin, and made flesh in her womb, is in His birth God and man united. The flesh formed by the Spirit is nourished, grows up to manhood, speaks, teaches, works, and is the Christ. Receive meanwhile this fable, if you choose to call it so—it is like some of your own—while we go on to show how Christ's claims are proved, and who the parties are with you by whom such fables have been set agoing to overthrow the truth, which they resemble. The

Jews, too, were well aware that Christ was coming, as those to whom the prophets spake. Nay, even now His advent is expected by them; nor is there any other contention between them and us, than that they believe the advent has not yet occurred. For two comings of Christ having been revealed to us: a first, which has been fulfilled in the lowliness of a human lot; a second, which impends over the world, now near its close, in all the majesty of Deity unveiled; and, by misunderstanding the first, they have concluded that the second—which, as matter of more manifest prediction, they set their hopes on—is the only one. It was the merited punishment of their sin not to understand the Lord's first advent: for if they had, they would have believed; and if they had believed, they would have obtained salvation. They themselves read how it is written of them that they are deprived of wisdom and understanding—of the use of eyes and ears [Isa. vi. 10].

As, then, under the force of their prejudgment, they had convinced themselves from His lowly guise that Christ was no more than man, it followed from that, as a necessary consequence, that they should hold Him a magician from the powers which He displayed,—expelling devils from men by a word, restoring vision to the blind, cleansing the leprous, reinvigorating the paralytic, summoning the dead to life again, making the very elements of nature obey Him, stilling the storms and walking on the sea; proving that He was the Logos of God, that primordial first-begotten Word, accompanied by power and reason, and based on Spirit,—that He who was now doing all things by His word, and He who had done that of old, were one and the same.

But the Jews were so exasperated by His teaching, by which their rulers and chiefs were convicted of the truth, chiefly because so many turned aside to Him, that at last they brought Him before Pontius Pilate, at the time Roman governor of Syria, and, by the violence of their outcries against Him, extorted a sentence giving Him up to them to be crucified. He Himself had predicted this; which, however, would have mattered little had not the prophets of old done it as well. And yet, nailed upon the cross, He exhibited many notable signs, by which His death was distinguished from all

others. At His own free-will, He with a word dismissed from Him His spirit, anticipating the executioner's work. In the same hour, too, the light of day was withdrawn, when the sun at the very time was in his meridian blaze. Those who were not aware that this had been predicted about Christ, no doubt thought it an eclipse. You yourselves have the account of the world-portent still in your archives. Then, when His body was taken down from the cross and placed in a sepulchre, the Jews in their eager watchfulness surrounded it with a large military guard, lest, as He had predicted His resurrection from the dead on the third day, His disciples might remove by stealth His body, and deceive even the incredulous. But, lo, on the third day there was a sudden shock of earthquake, and the stone which sealed the sepulchre was rolled away, and the guard fled off in terror: without a single disciple near, the grave was found empty of all but the clothes of the buried One. But nevertheless, the leaders of the Jews, whom it nearly concerned both to spread abroad a lie, and keep back a people tributary and submissive to them from the faith, gave it out that the body of Christ had been stolen by His followers. For the Lord, you see, did not go forth into the public gaze, lest the wicked should be delivered from their error; that faith also, destined to a great reward, might hold its ground in difficulty. But He spent forty days with some of His disciples down in Galilee, a region of Judea, instructing them in the doctrines they were to teach to others. Thereafter, having given them commission to preach the gospel through the world, He was encompassed with a cloud and taken up to heaven,—a fact more certain far than the assertions of your Proculi concerning Romulus.<sup>1</sup>

All these things Pilate did to Christ; and now in fact a Christian in his own convictions, he sent word of Him to the reigning Cæsar, who was at the time Tiberius. Yes, and the Cæsars too would have believed on Christ, if either the Cæsars had not been necessary for the world, or if Christians could have been Cæsars. His disciples also spreading over

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<sup>1</sup> Proculus was a Roman senator, who affirmed that Romulus had appeared to him after his death.



the world, did as their Divine Master bade them; and after suffering greatly themselves from the persecutions of the Jews, and with no unwilling heart, as having faith undoubting in the truth, at last by Nero's cruel sword sowed the seed of Christian blood at Rome. Yes, and we shall prove that even your own gods are effective witnesses for Christ. It is a great matter if, to give you faith in Christians, I can bring forward the authority of the very beings on account of whom you refuse them credit.

Thus far we have carried out the plan we laid down. We have set forth this origin of our sect and name, with this account of the Founder of Christianity. Let no one henceforth charge us with infamous wickedness; let no one think that it is otherwise than we have represented, for none may give a false account of his religion. For in the very fact that he says he worships another god than he really does, he is guilty of denying the object of his worship, and transferring his worship and homage to another; and in the transference he ceases to worship the god he has repudiated. We say, and before all men we say, and torn and bleeding under your tortures, we cry out, "We worship God through Christ." Count Christ a man, if you please; by Him and in Him God would be known and be adored. If the Jews object, we answer that Moses, who was but a man, taught them their religion; against the Greeks we urge that Orpheus at Pieria, Musæus at Athens, Melampus at Argos, Trophonius in Bœotia, imposed religious rites; turning to yourselves, who exercise sway over the nations, it was the man Numa Pompilius who laid on the Romans a heavy load of costly superstitions. Surely Christ, then, had a right to reveal Deity, which was in fact His own essential possession, not with the object of bringing boors and savages by the dread of multitudinous gods, whose favour must be won, into some civilisation, as was the case with Numa; but as one who aimed to enlighten men already civilised, and under illusions from their very culture, that they might come to the knowledge of the truth. Search, then, and see if that divinity of Christ be true. If it be of such a nature that the acceptance of it transforms a man, and makes him truly good, there is implied



in that the duty of renouncing what is opposed to it as false; especially on every ground that which, hiding itself under the names and images of the dead, labours to convince men of its divinity by certain signs, and miracles, and oracles.

And we affirm indeed the existence of certain spiritual essences. Nor is their name unfamiliar. The philosophers acknowledge there are demons; Socrates himself waiting on a demon's will. Why not? since it is said an evil spirit attached itself specially to him even from his childhood—turning his mind no doubt from what was good. The poets are all acquainted with demons too; even the ignorant common people make frequent use of them in cursing. In fact, they call upon Satan the demon-chief in their execrations, as though from some instinctive soul-knowledge of him. Plato also admits the existence of angels. The dealers in magic, no less, come forward as witnesses to the existence of both kinds of spirits.

We are instructed, moreover, by our sacred books how from certain angels, who fell of their own free-will, there sprang a more wicked demon-brood, condemned of God along with the authors of their race, and that chief we have referred to. It will for the present be enough, however, that some account is given of their work. Their great business is the ruin of mankind. So, from the very first, spiritual wickedness sought our destruction. They inflict, accordingly, upon our bodies diseases and other grievous calamities, while by violent assaults they hurry the soul into sudden and extraordinary excesses. Their marvellous subtleness and tenuity give them access to both parts of our nature. As spiritual, they can do great harm; for, invisible and intangible, we are not cognizant of their action save by its effects, when some inexplicable, unseen poison in the breeze blights the apples and the grain while in the flower, or kills them in the bud, or destroys them when they have reached maturity; as though by the tainted atmosphere in some unknown way spreading abroad its pestilential exhalations. So, too, by an influence equally obscure, demons and angels breathe into the soul and rouse up its corruptions with furious passions and vile excesses, or with cruel lusts accompanied by various

errors, of which the worst is that by which these deities are commended to the favour of deceived and deluded human beings, that they may get their proper food of flesh-fumes and blood when that is offered up to idol-images. And what is daintier food to the spirit of evil, than turning men's minds away from the true God by the illusions of a false divination?

And here I shall explain how these illusions are managed. Every spirit is possessed of wings. This is a common property of both angels and demons. So they are everywhere in a single moment; the whole world is as one place to them; all that is done over the whole extent of it, it is as easy for them to know as to report. Their swiftness of motion is taken for divinity, because their nature is unknown. Thus they would have themselves thought sometimes the authors of the things which they announce; and sometimes, no doubt, the bad things are their doing, never the good. The purposes of God, too, they took up of old from the lips of the prophets, even as they spoke them; and they gather them still from their works, when they hear them read aloud. Thus getting, too, from this source some intimations of the future, they set themselves up as rivals of the true God, while they steal His divinations. But the skill with which their responses are shaped to meet events, your Cræsi and Pyrrhi know too well. On the other hand, it was in that way we have explained, the Pythian was able to declare that a tortoise was being cooked with the flesh of a lamb; in a moment he had been to Lydia. From dwelling in the air, and their nearness to the stars, and their commerce with the clouds they have means of knowing the preparatory processes going on in these upper regions and thus can give promise of the rains which they already feel. Very kind too, no doubt, they are in regard to the healing of diseases. For, first of all, they make you ill; then, to get a miracle out of it, they command the application of remedies either altogether new, or contrary to those in use, and straightway withdrawing hurtful influence, they are supposed to have wrought a cure. What need, then, to speak of their other artifices, or yet further of the deceptive power which they have as spirits?—of these Castor apparitions, and water carried by a sieve,

and a ship drawn along by a guide, and a beard reddened by a touch,—all done with the one object of showing that men should believe in the deity of stones, and not seek after the only true God?

Moreover, if sorcerers call forth ghosts, and even make what seem the souls of the dead to appear; if they put boys to death in order to get a response from the oracle; if, with their juggling illusions, they make a pretence of doing various miracles; if they put dreams into people's minds by the power of the angels and demons whose aid they have invited, by whose influence, too, goats and tables are made to divine,—how much more likely is this power of evil to be zealous in doing with all its might, of its own inclination, and for its own objects, what it does to serve the ends of others! Or if both angels and demons do just what your gods do, where in that case is the pre-eminence of deity, which we must surely think to be above all in might? Will it not then be more reasonable to hold that these spirits make themselves gods, giving as they do the very proofs which raise your gods to godhead, than that the gods are the equals of angels and demons? You make a distinction of places, I suppose, regarding as gods in their temple those whose divinity you do not recognise elsewhere; counting the madness which leads one man to leap from the sacred houses, to be something different from that which leads another to leap from an adjoining house; looking on one who cuts his arms and secret parts as under a different furor from another who cuts his throat. The result of the frenzy is the same in both cases, and the manner of instigation is one.

But thus far we have been dealing only in words: we now proceed to a proof of facts, in which we shall show that under different names you have real identity. Let a person be brought before your tribunals, who is plainly under demoniacal possession. The wicked spirits, bidden speak by a follower of Christ, will as readily make the truthful confession that he is a demon, as elsewhere he has falsely asserted that he is a god. Or, if you will, let there be produced one of the god-possessioned, as they are supposed, who, inhaling at the altar, conceive divinity from the fumes, who are delivered

of it by retching, who vent it forth in agonies of gasping. Let that same Virgin Cælestis herself the rain-promiser, let Æsculapius discoverer of medicines, ready to prolong the life of Socordius, and Tenatius, and Asclepiodotus, now in the last extremity, if they would not confess, in their fear of lying to a Christian, that they were demons, then and there shed the blood of that most impudent follower of Christ. What clearer than a work like that? what more trustworthy than such a proof? The simplicity of truth is thus set forth; its own worth sustains it; no ground remains for the least suspicion. Do you say that it is done by magic, or some trick of that sort? You will not say anything of the sort, if you have been allowed the use of your ears and eyes. For what argument can you bring against a thing that is exhibited to the eye in its naked reality? If, on the one hand, they are really gods, why do they pretend to be demons? Is it from fear of us? In that case your divinity is put in subjection to Christians; and you surely can never ascribe deity to that which is under authority of man, nay (if it adds aught to the disgrace) of its very enemies. If, on the other hand, they are demons or angels, why, inconsistently with this, do they presume to set themselves forth as acting the part of gods? For as beings who put themselves out as gods would never willingly call themselves demons, if they were gods indeed, that they might not thereby in fact abdicate their dignity; so those whom you know to be no more than demons, would not dare to act as gods, if those whose names they take and use were really divine. For they would not dare to treat with disrespect the higher majesty of beings, whose displeasure they would feel was to be dreaded. So this divinity of yours is no divinity; for if it were, it would not be pretended to by demons, and it would not be denied by gods. But since on both sides there is a concurrent acknowledgment that they are not gods, gather from this that there is but a single race—I mean the race of demons, the real race in both cases. Let your search, then, now be after gods; for those whom you had imagined to be so you find to be spirits of evil. The truth is, as we have thus not only shown from your own gods that neither themselves nor any others have claims to deity, you



may see at once who is really God, and whether that is He and He alone whom we Christians own; as also whether you are to believe in Him, and worship Him, after the manner of our Christian faith and discipline.

But at once they will say, Who is this Christ with his fables? is he an ordinary man? is he a sorcerer? was his body stolen by his disciples from its tomb? is he now in the realms below? or is he not rather up in the heavens, thence about to come again, making the whole world shake, filling the earth with dread alarms, making all but Christians wail—as the Power of God, and the Spirit of God, and the Word, and the Reason, and the Wisdom, and the Son of God? Mock as you like, but get the demons if you can to join you in your mocking; let *them* deny that Christ is coming to judge every human soul which has existed from the world's beginning, clothing it again with the body it laid aside at death; let *them* declare it, say, before your tribunal, that this work has been allotted to Minos and Rhadamanthus, as Plato and the poets agree; let them put away from them at least the mark of ignominy and condemnation. They disclaim being unclean spirits, which yet we must hold as indubitably proved by their relish for the blood and fumes and fœtid carcasses of sacrificial animals, and even by the vile language of their ministers. Let them deny that, for their wickedness condemned already, they are kept for that very judgment-day, with all their worshippers and their works. Why, all the authority and power we have over them is from our naming the name of Christ, and recalling to their memory the woes with which God threatens them at the hands of Christ as Judge, and which they expect one day to overtake them. Fearing Christ in God, and God in Christ, they become subject to the servants of God and Christ. So at our touch and breathing, overwhelmed by the thought and realization of those judgment fires, they leave at our command the bodies they have entered, unwilling, and distressed, and before your very eyes put to an open shame. You believe them when they lie; give credit to them, then, when they speak the truth about themselves. No one plays the liar to bring disgrace upon his own head, but for the sake of honour rather. You



give a readier confidence to people making confessions against themselves, than denials in their own behalf. It has not been an unusual thing, accordingly, for those testimonies of your deities to convert men to Christianity; for in giving full belief to them, we are led to believe in Christ. Yes, your very gods kindle up faith in our Scriptures, they build up the confidence of our hope. You do homage, as I know, to them also with the blood of Christians. On no account, then, would they lose those who are so useful and dutiful to them, anxious even to hold you fast, lest some day or other as Christians you might put them to the rout,—if under the power of a follower of Christ, who desires to prove to you the Truth, it were at all possible for them to lie.

This whole confession of these beings, in which they declare that they are not gods, and in which they tell you that there is no God but one, the God whom we adore, is quite sufficient to clear us from the crime of treason, chiefly against the Roman religion. For if it is certain the gods have no existence, there is no religion in the case. If there is no religion, because there are no gods, we are assuredly not guilty of any offence against religion. Instead of that, the charge recoils on your own head: worshipping a lie, you are really guilty of the crime you charge on us, not merely by refusing the true religion of the true God, but by going the further length of persecuting it.

But now, granting that these objects of your worship are really gods, is it not generally held that there is one higher and more potent, as it were the world's chief ruler, endowed with absolute power and majesty? For the common way is to apportion deity, giving an imperial and supreme domination to one, while its offices are put into the hands of many, as Plato describes great Jupiter in the heavens, surrounded by an array at once of deities and demons. It behoves us, therefore, to show equal respect to the procurators, prefects, and governors of the divine empire. And yet how great a crime does he commit, who, with the object of gaining higher favour with the Cæsar, transfers his endeavours and his hopes to another, and does not confess that the appellation of God as of Emperor belongs only to the Supreme Head, when it is held a

capital offence among us to call, or hear called, by the highest title any other than Cæsar himself! Let one man worship God, another Jupiter; let one lift suppliant hands to the heavens, another to the altar of Fides; let one—if you choose to take this view of it—count in prayer the clouds, and another the ceiling pannels; let one consecrate his own life to his God, and another that of a goat. For see that you do not give a further ground for the charge of irreligion, by taking away religious liberty, and forbidding free choice of deity, so that I may no longer worship according to my inclination, but am compelled to worship against it. Not even a human being would care to have unwilling homage rendered to him; and so the very Egyptians have been permitted the legal use of their ridiculous superstition, liberty to make gods of birds and beasts, nay, to condemn to death any one who kills a god of their sort.

Every province even, and every city, has its god. Syria has Astarte, Arabia has Dusares, the Norici have Belenus, Africa has its Cælestis, Mauritania has its own princes. I have spoken, I think, of Roman provinces, and yet I have not said their gods are Roman; for they are not worshipped at Rome any more than others who are ranked as deities over Italy itself by municipal consecration, such as Delventinus of Casinum, Visidianus of Narnia, Ancharia of Asculum, Nortia of Volsinii, Valentia of Oriculum, Hostia of Satrium, Father Curis of Falisci, in honour of whom, too, Juno got her surname. In fact, we alone are prevented having a religion of our own. We give offence to the Romans, we are excluded from the rights and privileges of Romans, because we do not worship the gods of Rome. It is well that there is a God of all, whose we all are, whether we will or no. But with you liberty is given to worship any god but the true God, as though He were not rather the God all should worship, to whom all belong.

I think I have offered sufficient proof upon the question of false and true divinity, having shown that the proof rests not merely on debate and argument, but on the witness of the very beings whom you believe are gods, so that the point needs no further handling. However, having been led thus

naturally to speak of the Romans, I shall not avoid the controversy which is invited by the groundless assertion of those who maintain that, as a reward of their singular homage to religion, the Romans have been raised to such heights of power as to have become masters of the world; and that so certainly divine are the beings they worship, that those prosper beyond all others, who beyond all others honour them. This, forsooth, is the wages the gods have paid the Romans for their devotion. The progress of the empire is to be ascribed to Sterculus, and Mutunus, and Larentina! For I can hardly think that foreign gods would have been disposed to show more favour to an alien race than to their own, and given their own fatherland, in which they had their birth, grew up to manhood, became illustrious, and at last were buried, over to invaders from another shore!

As for Cybele, if she set her affections on the city of Rome as sprung of the Trojan stock saved from the arms of Greece, she herself forsooth being of the same race,—if she foresaw her transference<sup>1</sup> to the avenging people by whom Greece the conqueror of Phrygia was to be subdued, let her look to it (in regard of her native country's conquest by Greece). Why, too, even in these days the *Mater Magna* has given a notable proof of her greatness which she has conferred as a boon upon the city, when, after the loss to the State of Marcus Aurelius at Sirmium, on the sixteenth before the Kalends of April, that most sacred high priest of hers was offering, a week after, impure libations of blood drawn from his own arms, and issuing his commands that the ordinary prayers should be made for the safety of the emperor already dead. O tardy messengers, O sleepy despatches, through whose fault Cybele had not an earlier knowledge of the imperial decease, that the Christians might have no occasion to ridicule a godless so unworthy.

Jupiter, again, would surely never have permitted his own Crete to fall at once before the Roman Fasces, forgetful of that Idean cave and the Corybantian cymbals, and the sweet

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<sup>1</sup> Her image was taken from Pessinus, in Asia Minor, seat of the oracle, to Rome, to satisfy an oracle in the Sibylline Books.

odour of her who nursed him there. Would he not have exalted his own tomb above the entire Capitol, that the land which covered the ashes of Jove might rather be the mistress of the world? Would Juno have desired the destruction of the Punic city, beloved even to the neglect of Samos, and that by a nation of *Æneadæ*? As to that I know, "Here were her arms, here was her chariot, this kingdom, if the Fates permit, the goddess tends and cherishes to be mistress of the nations." Jove's hapless wife and sister had no power to prevail against the Fates! "Jupiter himself is sustained by fate." And yet the Romans have never done such homage to the Fates, which gave them Carthage against the purpose and the will of Juno, as to the abandoned harlot Larentina.

It is undoubted that not a few of your gods have reigned on earth as kings. If, then, they now possess the power of bestowing empire, when they were kings themselves from whence had they received their kingly honours? Whom did Jupiter and Saturn worship? A *Sterculus*, I suppose. But did the Romans, along with the native-born inhabitants, afterwards adore also some who were never kings? In that case, however, they were under the reign of others, who did not yet bow down to them, as not yet raised to godhead. It belongs to others, then, to make gift of kingdoms, since there were kings before these gods had their names on the roll of divinities. But how utterly foolish it is to attribute the greatness of the Roman name to religious merits, since it was after Rome became an empire, or call it still a kingdom, that the religion she professes made its chief progress! Is it the case now? Has its religion been the source of the prosperity of Rome? For though Numa set agoing an eagerness after superstitious observances, yet religion among the Romans was not yet a matter of images or temples. It was frugal in its ways, and its rites were simple, and there were no capitolis struggling to the heavens; but the altars were offhand ones of turf, and the sacred vessels were yet of Samian earthenware, and from these the odours rose, and no likeness of God was to be seen. For at that time the skill of the Greeks and Tuscans in image-making had not yet overrun the city with the products of their art. The Romans, therefore, were not



distinguished for their devotion to the gods before they attained to greatness; and so their greatness was not the result of their religion.

Indeed, how could religion make a people great who have owed their greatness to their irreligion? For, if I am not mistaken, kingdoms and empires are acquired by wars, and are extended by victories. More than that, you cannot have wars and victories without the taking, and often the destruction, of cities. That is a thing in which the gods have their share of calamity. Houses and temples suffer alike; there is indiscriminate slaughter of priests and citizens; the hand of rapine is laid equally upon sacred and on common treasure. Thus the sacrileges of the Romans are as numerous as their trophies. They boast as many triumphs over the gods as over the nations; as many spoils of battle they have still, as there remain images of captive deities. And the poor gods submit to be adored by their enemies, and they ordain illimitable empire to those whose injuries rather than their simulated homage should have had retribution at their hands. But divinities unconscious are with impunity dishonoured, just as in vain they are adored. You certainly never can believe that devotion to religion has evidently advanced to greatness a people who, as we have put it, have either grown by injuring religion, or have injured religion by their growth. Those, too, whose kingdoms have become part of the one great whole of the Roman empire, were not without religion when their kingdoms were taken from them.

Examine then, and see if *He* be not the dispenser of kingdoms, who is Lord at once of the world which is ruled, and of man himself who rules; if He have not ordained the changes of dynasties, with their appointed seasons, who was before all time, and made the world a body of times; if the rise and the fall of states are not the work of Him, under whose sovereignty the human race once existed without states at all. How do you allow yourselves to fall into such error? Why, the Rome of rural simplicity is older than some of her gods; she reigned before her proud, vast Capitol was built. The Babylonians exercised dominion, too, before the days of the Pontiffs; and the Medes before the Quindecemvirs; and



the Egyptians before the Salii; and the Assyrians before the Luperci; and the Amazons before the Vestal Virgins. And to add another point: if the religions of Rome give empire, ancient Judea would never have been a kingdom, despising as it did one and all these idol deities; Judea, whose God you Romans once honoured with victims, and its temple with gifts, and its people with treaties; and which would never have been beneath your sceptre but for that last and crowning offence against God, in rejecting and crucifying Christ.

Enough has been said in these remarks to confute the charge of treason against your religion; for we cannot be held to do harm to that which has no existence. When we are called therefore to sacrifice, we resolutely refuse, relying on the knowledge we possess, by which we are well assured of the real objects to whom these services are offered, under profaning of images and the deification of human names. Some, indeed, think it a piece of insanity that, when it is in our power to offer sacrifice at once, and go away unharmed, holding as ever our convictions, we prefer an obstinate persistence in our confession to our safety. You advise us, forsooth, to take unjust advantage of you; but we know whence such suggestions come, who is at the bottom of it all, and how every effort is made, now by cunning suasion, and now by merciless persecution, to overthrow our constancy. No other than that spirit, half devil and half angel, who, hating us because of his own separation from God, and stirred with envy for the favour God has shown us, turns your minds against us by an occult influence, moulding and instigating them to all that perversity in judgment, and that unrighteous cruelty, which we have mentioned at the beginning of our work, when entering on this discussion.

For, though the whole power of demons and kindred spirits is subject to us, yet still, as ill-disposed slaves sometimes conjoin contumacy with fear, and delight to injure those of whom they at the same time stand in awe, so is it here. For fear also inspires hatred. Besides, in their desperate condition, as already under condemnation, it gives them some comfort, while punishment delays, to have the usufruct of their malignant dispositions. And yet, when hands are laid on

them, they are subdued at once, and submit to their lot; and those whom at a distance they oppose, in close quarters they supplicate for mercy. So when, like insurrectionary work-houses, or prisons, or mines, or any such penal slaveries, they break forth against us their masters, they know all the while that they are not a match for us, and just on that account, indeed, rush the more recklessly to destruction. We resist them unwillingly, as though they were equals, and contend against them by persevering in that which they assail; and our triumph over them is never more complete than when we are condemned for resolute adherence to our faith.

But as it was easily seen to be unjust to compel freemen against their will to offer sacrifice (for even in other acts of religious service a willing mind is required), it should be counted quite absurd for one man to compel another to do honour to the gods, when he ought ever voluntarily, and in the sense of his own need, to seek their favour, lest in the liberty which is his right he should be ready to say, "I want none of Jupiter's favours; pray who art thou? Let Janus meet me with angry looks, with whichever of his faces he likes; what have you to do with me?" You have been led, no doubt, by these same evil spirits to compel us to offer sacrifice for the well-being of the emperor; and you are under a necessity of using force, just as we are under an obligation to face the dangers of it.

This brings us, then, to the second ground of accusation, that we are guilty of treason against a majesty more august; for you do homage with a greater dread and an intenser reverence to Cæsar, than Olympian Jove himself. And if you knew it, upon sufficient grounds. For is not any living man better than a dead one, whoever he be? But this is not done by you on any other ground than regard to a power whose presence you vividly realize; so that also in this you are convicted of impiety to your gods, inasmuch as you show a greater reverence to a human sovereignty than you do to them. Then, too, among you, people far more readily swear a false oath in the name of all the gods, than in the name of the single genius of Cæsar.

Let it be made clear, then, first of all, if those to whom

sacrifice is offered are really able to protect either emperor or anybody else, and so adjudge us guilty of treason, if angels and demons, spirits of most wicked nature, do any good, if the lost save, if the condemned give liberty, if the dead (I refer to what you know well enough) defend the living. For surely the first thing they would look to would be the protection of their statues, and images, and temples, which rather owe their safety, I think, to the watch kept by Cæsar's guards. Nay, I think the very materials of which these are made come from Cæsar's mines, and there is not a temple but depends on Cæsar's will. Yes, and many gods have felt the displeasure of the Cæsar. It makes for my argument if they are also partakers of his favour, when he bestows on them some gift or privilege. How shall they who are thus in Cæsar's power, who belong entirely to him, have Cæsar's protection in their hands, so that you can imagine them able to give to Cæsar what they more readily get from him? This, then, is the ground on which we are charged with treason against the imperial majesty, to wit, that we do not put the emperors under their own possessions; that we do not offer a mere mock service on their behalf, as not believing their safety rests in leaden hands. But you are impious in a high degree who look for it where it is not, who seek it from those who have it not to give, passing by Him who has it entirely in His power. Besides this, you persecute those who know where to seek for it, and who, knowing where to seek for it, are able as well to secure it.

For we offer prayer for the safety of our princes to the eternal, the true, the living God, whose favour, beyond all others, they must themselves desire. They know from whom they have obtained their power; they know, as they are men, from whom they have received life itself; they are convinced that He is God alone, on whose power alone they are entirely dependent, to whom they are second, after whom they occupy the highest places, before and above all the gods. Why not, since they are above all living men, and the living, as living, are superior to the dead? They reflect upon the extent of their power, and so they come to understand the highest; they acknowledge that they have all their might from Him

against whom their might is nought. Let the emperor make war on heaven; let him lead heaven captive in his triumph; let him put guards on heaven; let him impose taxes on heaven! He cannot. Just because he is less than heaven, he is great. For he himself is His to whom heaven and every creature appertains. He gets his sceptre where he first got his humanity; his power where he got the breath of life. Thither we lift our eyes, with hands outstretched, because free from sin; with head uncovered, for we have nothing whereof to be ashamed; finally, without a monitor, because it is from the heart we supplicate. And, without ceasing, for all our emperors we offer prayer. We pray for life prolonged; for security to the empire; for protection to the imperial house; for brave armies, a faithful senate, a virtuous people, the world at rest,—whatever, as man or Cæsar, an emperor would wish.

These things I cannot ask from any but the God from whom I know I shall obtain them, both because He alone bestows them and because I have claims upon Him for their gift, as being a servant of His, rendering homage to Him alone, persecuted for His doctrine, offering to Him, at His own requirement, that costly and noble sacrifice of prayer [Heb. x. 22] despatched from a chaste body, and unstained soul, a sanctified spirit,—not the few grains of incense a farthing buys—tears of an Arabian tree,—not a few drops of wine,—not the blood of some worthless ox to whom death is a relief, and, in addition to other offensive things, a polluted conscience, so that one wonders, when your victims are examined by these vile priests, why the examination is not rather of the sacrificers than the sacrifices. With our hands thus stretched out and up to God, rend us with your iron claws, hang us up on crosses, wrap us in flames, take our heads from us with the sword, let loose the wild beasts on us,—the very attitude of a Christian praying is one of preparation for all punishment. Let this, good rulers, be your work: wring from us the soul, beseeching God on the emperor's behalf. Upon the truth of God, and devotion to His name, put the brand of crime.

But we merely, you say, flatter the emperor, and feign these prayers of ours to escape persecution. Thank you for



your mistake. For you give us the opportunity of proving our allegations. Do you, then, who think that we care nothing for the welfare of Cæsar, look into God's revelations, examine our sacred books, which we do not keep in hiding, and which many accidents put into the hands of those who are not of us. Learn from them that a large benevolence is enjoined upon us, even so far as to supplicate God for our enemies, and to beseech blessings on our persecutors [Matt. v. 44]. Who, then, are greater enemies and persecutors of Christians, than the very parties with treason against whom we are charged? Nay, even in terms, and most clearly, the Scripture says, "Pray for kings, and rulers, and powers, that all may be peace with you" [1 Tim. ii. 2]. For when there is disturbance in the empire, if the commotion is felt by its other members, surely we too, though we are not thought to be given to disorder, are to be found in some place or other which the calamity affects.

There is also another and a greater necessity for our offering prayer in behalf of the emperors, nay, for the complete stability of the empire, and for Roman interests in general. For we know that a mighty shock impending over the whole earth—in fact, the very end of all things threatening dreadful woes—is only retarded by the continued existence of the Roman empire. We have no desire, then, to be overtaken by these dire events; and in praying that their coming may be delayed, we are lending our aid to Rome's duration. More than this, though we decline to swear by the genii of the Cæsars, we swear by their safety, which is worth far more than all your genii. Are you ignorant that these genii are called "Dæmones," and thence the diminutive name "Dæmonia" is applied to them? We respect in the emperors the ordinance of God, who has set them over the nations. We know that there is that in them which God has willed; and to what God has willed we desire all safety, and we count an oath by it a great oath. But as for dæmons, that is, your genii, we have been in the habit of exorcising them, not of swearing by them, and thereby conferring on them divine honour.

But why dwell longer on the reverence and sacred respect



of Christians to the emperor, whom we cannot but look up to as called by our Lord to his office? so that on valid grounds I might say Cæsar is more ours than yours, for our God has appointed him. Therefore, as having this propriety in him, I do more than you for his welfare, not merely because I ask it of Him who can give it, or because I ask it as one who deserves to get it, but also because, in keeping the majesty of Cæsar within due limits, and putting it under the Most High, and making it less than divine, I commend him the more to the favour of Deity, to whom I make him alone inferior. But I place him in subjection to one I regard as more glorious than himself. Never will I call the emperor God, and that either because it is not in me to be guilty of falsehood; or that I dare not turn him into ridicule; or that not even himself will desire to have that high name applied to him. If he is but a man, it is his interest as man to give God His higher place. Let him think it enough to bear the name of emperor. That, too, is a great name of God's giving. To call him God, is to rob him of his title. If he is not a man, emperor he cannot be. Even when, amid the honours of a triumph, he sits on that lofty chariot, he is reminded that he is only human. A voice at his back keeps whispering in his ear, "Look behind thee; remember thou art but a man." And it only adds to his exultation, that he shines with a glory so surpassing as to require an admonitory reference to his condition. It adds to his greatness that he needs such a reminiscence, lest he should think himself divine.

Augustus, the founder of the empire, would not even have the title Lord; for that, too, is a name of Deity. For my part, I am willing to give the emperor this designation, but in the common acceptation of the word, and when I am not forced to call him Lord as in God's place. But my relation to him is one of freedom; for I have but one true Lord, God omnipotent and eternal, who is Lord of the emperor as well. How can he, who is truly father of his country, be its lord? The name of piety is more grateful than the name of power; so the heads of families are called fathers rather than lords. Far less should the emperor have the name of God. We can only profess our belief that he is that by the most unworthy,

nay, a fatal flattery; it is just as if, having an emperor, you call another by the name, in which case will you not give great and unappeasable offence to him who actually reigns?—an offence he, too, needs to fear on whom you have bestowed the title. Give all reverence to God, if you wish Him to be propitious to the emperor. Give up all worship of, and belief in, any other being as divine. Cease also to give the sacred name to him who has need of God himself. If such adulation is not ashamed of its lie, in addressing a man as divine, let it have some dread at least of the evil omen which it bears. It is the invocation of a curse, to give Cæsar the name of god before his apotheosis.

This is the reason, then, why Christians are counted public enemies: that they pay no vain, nor false, nor foolish honours to the emperor; that, as men believing in the true religion, they prefer to celebrate their festal days with a good conscience, instead of with the common wantonness. It is, forsooth, a notable homage to bring fires and couches out into the public, to have feasting from street to street, to turn the city into one great tavern, to make mud with wine, to run in troops to acts of violence, to deeds of shamelessness, to lust allurements! What! is public joy manifested by public disgrace? Do things unseemly at other times beseem the festal days of princes? Do they who observe the rules of virtue out of reverence for Cæsar, for his sake turn aside from them? And shall piety be a licence to immoral deeds, and shall religion be regarded as affording the occasion for all riotous extravagance? Poor we, worthy of all condemnation! For why do we keep the votive days and high rejoicings in honour of the Cæsars with chastity, sobriety, and virtue? Why, on the day of gladness, do we neither cover our door-posts with laurels, nor intrude upon the day with lamps? It is a proper thing, at the call of a public festivity, to dress your house up like some new brothel! However, in the matter of this homage to a lesser majesty, in reference to which we are accused of a lower sacrilege, because we do not celebrate along with you the holidays of the Cæsars in a manner forbidden alike by modesty, decency, and purity,—in truth they have been established rather as affording oppor-

tunities for licentiousness than from any worthy motive,—in this matter I am anxious to point out how faithful and true you are, lest perchance here also those who will not have us counted Romans, but enemies of Rome's chief rulers, be found themselves worse than we wicked Christians! I appeal to the inhabitants of Rome themselves, to the native population of the seven hills: does that Roman vernacular of theirs ever spare a Cæsar? The Tiber and the wild beasts' schools bear witness. Say now if nature had covered our hearts with a transparent substance through which the light could pass, whose hearts, all graven over, would not betray the scene of another and another Cæsar presiding at the distribution of a largess? And this at the very time they are shouting, "May Jupiter take years from us, and with them lengthen life to you,"—words as foreign to the lips of a Christian as it is out of keeping with his character to desire a change of emperor.

But this is the rabble, you say; yet as the rabble they still are Romans, and none more frequently than they demand the death of Christians. Of course, then, the other classes, as befits their higher rank, are religiously faithful. No breath of treason is there ever in the senate, in the equestrian order, in the camp, in the palace. Whence, then, came a Cassius, a Niger, an Albinus? Whence they who beset the Cæsar [Commodus] between the two laurel groves? whence they who practised wrestling, that they might acquire skill to strangle him? Whence they who in full armour broke into the palace,<sup>1</sup> more audacious than all your Tigerii and Parthenii?<sup>2</sup> If I mistake not, they were Romans; that is, they were not Christians. Yet all of them, on the very eve of their traitorous outbreak, offered sacrifices for the safety of the emperor, and swore by his genius, one thing in profession, and another in the heart; and no doubt they were in the habit of calling Christians enemies of the state.

Yes, and persons who are now daily brought to light as confederates or approvers of these crimes and treasons, the still remanent gleanings after a vintage of traitors, with what

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<sup>1</sup> To murder Pertinax.

<sup>2</sup> Tigerius and Parthenius were among the murderers of Commodus.

verdant and branching laurels they clad their door-posts, with what lofty and brilliant lamps they smoked their porches, with what most exquisite and gaudy couches they divided the Forum among themselves, not that they might celebrate public rejoicings, but that they might get a foretaste of their own votive seasons in partaking of the festivities of another, and inaugurate the model and image of their hope, changing in their minds the emperor's name.

The same homage is paid, dutifully too, by those who consult astrologers, and soothsayers, and augurs, and magicians, about the life of the Cæsars,—arts which, as made known by the angels who sinned and forbidden by God, Christians do not even make use of in their own affairs. But who has any occasion to inquire about the life of the emperor, if he have not some wish or thought against it, or some hopes and expectations after it? For consultations of this sort have not the same motive in the case of friends as in the case of sovereigns. The anxiety of a kinsman is something very different from that of a subject.

If it is a fact that men bearing the name of Romans are found to be enemies of Rome, why are we, on the ground that we are regarded as enemies, denied the name of Romans? We may be at once Romans and foes of Rome, when men passing for Romans are discovered to be enemies of their country. So the affection, and fealty, and reverence, due to the emperors do not consist in such tokens of homage as these, which even hostility may be zealous in performing, chiefly as a cloak to its purposes; but in those ways which Deity as certainly enjoins on us, as they are held to be necessary in the case of all men as well as emperors. Deeds of true heart-goodness are not due by us to emperors alone. We never do good with respect of persons; for in our own interest we conduct ourselves as those who take no payment either of praise or premium from man, but from God, who both requires and remunerates an impartial benevolence. We are the same to emperors as to our ordinary neighbours. For we are equally forbidden to wish ill, to do ill, to speak ill, to think ill of all men. The thing we must not do to an emperor, we must not do to any one else: what we should



not do to anybody, *à fortiori*, perhaps we should not do to him whom God has been pleased so highly to exalt.

If we are enjoined, then, to love our enemies, as I have remarked above, whom have we to hate? If injured, we are forbidden to retaliate, lest we become as bad ourselves: who can suffer injury at our hands? In regard to this, recall your own experiences. How often you inflict gross cruelties on Christians, partly because it is your own inclination, and partly in obedience to the laws! How often, too, the hostile mob, paying no regard to you, takes the law into its own hand, and assails us with stones and flames! With the very frenzy of the Bacchanals, they do not even spare the Christian dead, but tear them, now sadly changed, no longer entire, from the rest of the tomb, from the asylum we might say of death, cut them in pieces, rend them asunder. Yet, banded together as we are, ever so ready to sacrifice our lives, what single case of revenge for injury are you able to point to, though, if it were held right among us to repay evil by evil, a single night with a torch or two could achieve an ample vengeance? But away with the idea of a sect divine avenging itself by human fires, or shrinking from the sufferings in which it is tried. If we desired, indeed, to act the part of open enemies, not merely of secret avengers, would there be any lacking in strength, whether of numbers or resources? The Moors, the Marcomanni, the Parthians themselves, or any single people, however great, inhabiting a distinct territory, and confined within its own boundaries, surpasses, forsooth, in numbers, one spread over all the world! We are but of yesterday, and we have filled every place among you—cities, islands, fortresses, towns, market-places, the very camp, tribes, companies, palace, senate, forum,—we have left nothing to you but the temples of your gods.

For what wars should we not be fit, not eager, even with unequal forces, we who so willingly yield ourselves to the sword, if in our religion it were not counted better to be slain than to slay? Without arms even, and raising no insurrectionary banner, but simply in enmity to you, we could carry on the contest with you by an ill-willed severance alone. For if such multitudes of men were to break away from you, and



betake themselves to some remote corner of the world, why, the very loss of so many citizens, whatever sort they were, would cover the empire with shame; nay, in the very forsaking, vengeance would be inflicted. Why, you would be horror-struck at the solitude in which you would find yourselves, at such an all-prevailing silence, and that stupor as of a dead world. You would have to seek subjects to govern. You would have more enemies than citizens remaining. For now it is the immense number of Christians which makes your enemies so few,—almost all the inhabitants of your various cities being followers of Christ. Yet you choose to call us enemies of the human race, rather than of human error. Nay, who would deliver you from these secret foes, ever busy both destroying your souls and ruining your health? Who would save you, I mean, from the attacks of those spirits of evil, which without reward or hire we exercise? This alone would be revenge enough for us, that you were henceforth left free to the possession of unclean spirits. But instead of taking into account what is due to us for the important protection we afford you, and though we are not merely no trouble to you, but in fact necessary to your well-being, you prefer to hold us enemies, as indeed we are, yet not of man, but rather of his error.

Ought not Christians, therefore, to receive not merely a somewhat milder treatment, but to have a place among the law-tolerated societies, seeing they are not chargeable with any such crimes as are commonly dreaded from societies of the illicit class? For, unless I mistake the matter, the prevention of such associations is based on a prudential regard to public order, that the state may not be divided into parties, which would naturally lead to disturbance in the electoral assemblies, the councils, the *curiæ*, the special conventions, even in the public shows by the hostile collisions of rival parties, especially when now, in pursuit of gain, men have begun to consider their violence an article to be bought and sold.

But as those in whom all ardour in the pursuit of glory and honour is dead, we have no pressing inducement to take part in your public meetings; nor is there aught more entirely

foreign to us than affairs of state. We acknowledge one all-embracing commonwealth—the world. We renounce all your spectacles, as strongly as we renounce the matters originating them, which we know were conceived of superstition; when we give up the very things which are the basis of their representations. Among us nothing is ever said, or seen, or heard, which has anything in common with the madness of the circus, the immodesty of the theatre, the atrocities of the arena, the useless exercises of the wrestling-ground. Why do you take offence at us because we differ from you in regard to your pleasures? If we will not partake of your enjoyments, the loss is ours, if there be loss in the case, not yours. We reject what pleases you. You, on the other hand, have no taste for what is our delight. The Epicureans were allowed by you to decide for themselves one true source of pleasure—I mean equanimity; the Christian, on his part, has many such enjoyments—what harm in that?

I shall at once go on, then, to exhibit the peculiarities of the Christian society, that, as I have refuted the evil charged against it, I may point out its positive good. We are a body knit together as such by common religious profession, by unity of discipline, and by the bond of a common hope. We meet together as an assembly and congregation, that, offering up prayer to God as with united force, we may wrestle with Him in our supplications. This violence God delights in. We pray, too, for the emperors, for their ministers and for all in authority, for the welfare of the world, for the prevalence of peace, for the delay of the final consummation. We assemble to read our sacred writings, if any peculiarity of the times makes either fore-warning or reminiscence needful. However it be in that respect with the sacred words, we nourish our faith, we animate our hope, we make our confidence more stedfast; and no less by inculcations of God's precepts we confirm good habits. In the same place also exhortations are made, rebukes and sacred censures are administered. For with a great gravity is the work of judging carried on among us, as befits those who feel assured that they are in the sight of God; and you have the most notable example of judgment to come when any one has sinned so

grievously as to acquire his severance from us in prayer, and the meeting, and all sacred intercourse. The tried men of our elders preside over us, obtaining that honour not by purchase, but by established character. There is no buying and selling of any sort in the things of God. Though we have our treasure-chest, it is not made up of purchase-money, as of a religion that has its price. On the monthly collection day, if he likes, each puts in a small donation; but only if it be his pleasure, and only if he be able: for there is no compulsion; all is voluntary. These gifts are, as it were, piety's deposit fund. For they are not taken thence and spent on feasts, and drinking-bouts, and eating-houses, but to support and bury poor people, to supply the wants of boys and girls destitute of means and parents, and of old persons confined now to the house; such, too, as have suffered shipwreck; and if there happen to be any in the mines, or banished to the islands, or shut up in the prisons, for nothing but their fidelity to the cause of God's church, they become the nurslings of their confession.

But it is mainly the deeds of a love so noble that lead many to put a brand upon us. See, they say, how they love one another, for themselves are animated by mutual hatred; how they are ready even to die for one another, for they themselves will sooner put to death. And they are wroth with us, too, because we call each other brethren; for no other reason, as I think, than because among themselves names of consanguinity are assumed in mere pretence of affection. But we are your brethren as well, by the law of our common mother nature, though you are hardly men, because brothers so unkind. At the same time, how much more fittingly they are called and counted brothers who have been led to the knowledge of God as their common Father, who have drunk in one spirit of holiness, who from the same womb of a common ignorance have agonized into the same light of truth! But on this very account, perhaps, we are regarded as having less claim to be true brothers, that no tragedy makes a noise about our brotherhood, or that the family possessions, which generally destroy brotherhood among you, create fraternal bonds among

us. One in mind and soul, we do not hesitate to share our earthly goods with one another.

All things are common among us but our wives. We give up our community where it is practised alone by others, who not only take possession of the wives of their friends, but most tolerantly also accommodate their friends with theirs, following the example, I believe, of those wise men of ancient times, the Greek Socrates and the Roman Cato, who shared with their friends the wives whom they had married, it seems for the sake of progeny both to themselves and to others; whether in this acting against their partners' wishes, I am not able to say. Why should they have any care over their chastity, when their husbands so readily bestowed it away? O noble example of Attic wisdom, of Roman gravity! —the philosopher and the censor playing pimps! What wonder if that great love of Christians towards one another is desecrated by you!

For you abuse also our humble feasts, on the ground that they are extravagant as well as infamously wicked. To us, it seems, applies the saying of Diogenes: "The people of Megara feast as though they were going to die on the morrow; they build as though they were never to die!" But one sees more readily the mote in another's eye than the beam in his own. Why, the very air is soured with the eructations of so many tribes, and *curiæ*, and *decuriæ*; the *Salii* cannot have their feast without going into debt; you must get the accountants to tell you what the tenths of Hercules and the sacrificial banquets cost; the choicest cook is appointed for the *Apaturia*, the *Dionysia*, the Attic mysteries; the smoke from the banquet of Serapis will call out the firemen. Yet about the modest supper-room of the Christians alone a great ado is made. Our feast explains itself by its name. The Greeks call it love. Whatever it costs, our outlay in the name of piety is gain, since with the good things of the feast we benefit the needy; not as it is with you, do parasites aspire to the glory of satisfying their licentious propensities, selling themselves for a belly-feast to all disgraceful treatment,—but as it is with God Himself, a peculiar respect is shown to the



lowly. If the object of our feast be good, in the light of that consider its further regulations. As it is an act of religious service, it permits no vileness or immodesty. The participants, before reclining, taste first of prayer to God. As much is eaten as satisfies the cravings of hunger; as much is drunk as befits the chaste. They say it is enough, as those who remember that even during the night they have to worship God; they talk as those who know that the Lord is one of their auditors. After manual ablution, and the bringing in of lights, each is asked to stand forth and sing, as he can, a hymn to God, either one from the holy Scriptures or one of his own composing,—a proof of the measure of our drinking. As the feast commenced with prayer, so with prayer it is closed. We go from it, not like troops of mischief-doers, nor bands of roamers, nor to break out into licentious acts, but to have as much care of our modesty and chastity as if we had been at a school of virtue rather than a banquet.

Give the meeting of the Christians its due, and hold it unlawful, if it is like assemblies of the illicit sort: by all means let it be condemned, if any complaint can be validly laid against it, such as lies against secret factions. But who has ever suffered harm in our assemblies? We are in our meetings just what we are when separated from each other; we are as a community what we are as individuals; we injure nobody, we trouble nobody. When the upright, when the virtuous meet together, when the pious, when the pure assemble in congregation, you ought not to call that a faction, but a *curia*—a sacred meeting.

On the contrary, *they* deserve the name of faction who conspire to bring odium on good men and virtuous, who cry out against innocent blood, offering as the justification of their enmity the baseless plea, that they think the Christians the cause of every public disaster, of every affliction with which the people are visited. If the Tiber rises as high as the city walls, if the Nile does not send its waters up over the fields, if the heavens give no rain, if there is an earthquake, if there is famine or pestilence, straightway the cry is, "Away with the Christians to the lion!"

What! shall you give such multitudes to a single beast?



Pray, tell me how many calamities befell the world and particular cities before Tiberius reigned—before the coming, that is, of Christ? We read of the islands of Hiera, and Anaphe, and Delos, and Rhodes, and Cos, with many thousands of human beings, having been swallowed up. Plato informs us that a region larger than Asia or Africa was seized by the Atlantic Ocean. An earthquake, too, drank up the Corinthian sea; and the force of the waves cut off a part of Lucania, whence it obtained the name of Sicily. These things surely could not have taken place without the inhabitants suffering by them.

But where—I do not say were Christians, those despisers of your gods—but where were your gods themselves in those days, when the flood poured its destroying waters over all the world, or, as Plato thought, merely the level portion of it? For that they are of later date than that calamity, the very cities in which they were born and died, nay, which they founded, bear ample testimony; for the cities could have no existence at this day unless as belonging to postdiluvian times. Palestine had not yet received from Egypt its Jewish swarm, nor had the race from which Christians sprung yet settled down there, when its neighbours Sodom and Gomorrha were consumed by fire from heaven. The country yet smells of that conflagration; and if there are apples there upon the trees, it is only a promise to the eye they give—you but touch them, and they turn to ashes. Nor had Tuscia and Campania to complain of Christians in the days when fire from heaven overwhelmed Vulsinii, and Pompeii was destroyed by fire from its own mountain. No one yet worshipped the true God at Rome, when Hannibal at Cannæ counted the Roman slain by the pecks of Roman rings. Your gods were all objects of adoration, universally acknowledged, when the Senones closely besieged the very Capitol. And it is in keeping with all this, that if adversity has at any time befallen cities, the temples and the walls have equally shared in the disaster, so that it is clear to demonstration the thing was not the doing of the gods, seeing it also overtook themselves.

The truth is, the human race has always deserved ill at God's hand. First of all, as undutiful to Him, because when

it knew Him in part, it not only did not seek after Him, but even invented other gods of its own to worship; and further, because, as the result of their willing ignorance of the Teacher of righteousness, the Judge and Avenger of sin, all vices and crimes grew and flourished. But had men sought, they would have come to know the glorious object of their seeking; and knowledge would have produced obedience, and obedience would have found a gracious instead of an angry God. They ought then to see that the very same God is angry with them now as in ancient times, before Christians were so much spoken of. It was *His* blessings they enjoyed—created before they made any of their deities: and why can they not take it in, that their evils come from the Being whose goodness they have failed to recognise? They suffer at the hands of Him to whom they have been ungrateful.

And, for all that is said, if we compare the calamities of former times, they fall on us more lightly now, since God gave Christians to the world. For from that time virtue put some restraint on the world's wickedness, and men began to pray for the averting of God's wrath. In a word, when the summer clouds give no rain, and the season is matter of anxiety, you indeed—full of feasting day by day, and ever eager for the banquet, baths and taverns and brothels always busy—offer up to Jupiter your rain-sacrifices, you enjoin on the people barefoot processions, you seek heaven at the Capitol, you look up to the temple-ceilings for the longed-for clouds—God and heaven not in all your thoughts: we, dried up with fastings, and our passions bound tightly up, holding back as long as possible from all the ordinary enjoyments of life, rolling in sackcloth and ashes, assail heaven with our importunities—touch God's heart—and when we have extorted divine compassion, why, Jupiter gets all the honour!

You, therefore, are the sources of trouble in human affairs; on you lies the blame of public adversities, since you are ever attracting them—you by whom God is despised and images are worshipped. It should surely seem the more natural thing to believe that it is the neglected One who is angry, and not they to whom all homage is paid; or most

unjustly they act, if, on account of the Christians, they send trouble on their own devotees, whom they are bound to keep clear of the punishments of Christians. But this, you say, hits your God as well, since He permits His worshippers to suffer on account of those who dishonour Him. But admit first of all His providential arrangements, and you will not make this retort. For He who once for all appointed an eternal judgment at the world's close, does not precipitate the separation, which is essential to judgment, before the end. Meanwhile He deals with all sorts of men alike, so that all together share His favors and reproofs. His will is, that outcasts and elect should have adversities and prosperities in common, that we should have all the same experience of His goodness and severity.

Having learned these things from His own lips, we love His goodness, we fear His wrath, while both by you are treated with contempt; and hence the sufferings of life, so far as it is our lot to be overtaken by them, are in our case gracious admonitions, while in yours they are divine punishments. We indeed are not the least put about; for, first, only one thing in this life greatly concerns us, and that is, to get quickly out of it; and next, if any adversity befalls us, it is laid to the door of your transgressions. Nay, though we are likewise involved in troubles because of our close connection with you, we are rather glad of it, because we recognise in it divine foretellings, which, in fact, go to confirm the confidence and faith of our hope. But if all the evils you endure are inflicted on you by the gods you worship out of spite to us, why do you continue to pay homage to beings so ungrateful, so unjust, who, instead of being angry with you, should rather have been aiding and abetting you by persecuting Christians,—keeping you clear of their sufferings?

But we are called to account as harm-doers on another ground, and are accused of being useless in the affairs of life. How in all the world can that be the case with people who are living among you, eating the same food, wearing the same attire, having the same habits, under the same necessities of existence? We are not Indian Brahmins or Gymnosophists, who dwell in woods and exile themselves from ordi-

nary human life. We do not forget the debt of gratitude we owe to God our Lord and Creator; we reject no creature of His hands, though certainly we exercise restraint upon ourselves, lest of any gift of His we make an immoderate or sinful use. So we sojourn with you in the world, abjuring neither forum, nor shambles, nor bath, nor booth, nor workshop, nor inn, nor weekly market, nor any other places of commerce. We sail with you, and fight with you, and till the ground with you; and in like manner we unite with you in your traffickings—even in the various arts we make public property of our works for your benefit. How it is we seem useless in your ordinary business, living with you and by you as we do, I am not able to understand.

But if I do not frequent your religious ceremonies, I am still on the sacred day a man. I do not at the Saturnalia bathe myself at dawn, that I may not lose both day and night; yet I bathe at a decent and healthful hour, which preserves me both in heat and blood. I can be rigid and pallid like you after ablution when I am dead. I do not recline in public at the feast of Bacchus, after the manner of the beast-fighters at their final banquet. Yet of your resources I partake, wherever I may chance to eat. I do not buy a crown for my head. What matters it to you how I use them, if nevertheless the flowers are purchased? I think it more agreeable to have them free and loose, waving all about. Even if they are woven into a crown, we smell the crown with our nostrils: let those look to it who scent the perfume with their hair. We do not go to your spectacles; yet the articles that are sold there, if I need them, I will obtain more readily at their proper places. We certainly buy no frankincense. If the Arabias complain of this, let the Sabæans be well assured that their more precious and costly merchandise is expended as largely in the burying of Christians as in the fumigating of the gods. At any rate, you say, the temple revenues are every day falling off: how few now throw in a contribution! In truth, we are not able to give alms both to your human and your heavenly mendicants; nor do we think that we are required to give any but to those who ask for it. Let Jupiter then hold out his hand and get, for our compassion spends



more in the streets than yours does in the temples. But your other taxes will acknowledge a debt of gratitude to Christians; for in the faithfulness which keeps us from fraud upon a brother, we make conscience of paying all their dues, so that, by ascertaining how much is lost by fraud and falsehood in the census declarations—the calculation may easily be made—it would be seen that the ground of complaint in one department of revenue is compensated by the advantages which others derive.

I will confess, however, without hesitation, that there are some who in a sense may complain of Christians that they are a sterile race: as, for instance, pimps, and panders, and bath-suppliers; assassins, and poisoners, and sorcerers; soothsayers, too, diviners, and astrologers. But it is a noble fruit of Christians, that they have no fruits for such as these. And yet, whatever loss your interests suffer from the religion we profess, the protection you have from us makes amply up for it. What value do you set on persons, I do not here urge who deliver you from demons, I do not urge who for your sakes present prayers before the throne of the true God, for perhaps you have no belief in that—but from whom you can have nothing to fear?

Yes, and no one considers what the loss is to the common weal,—a loss as great as it is real, no one estimates the injury entailed upon the state, when, men of virtue as we are, we are put to death in such numbers, when so many of the truly good suffer the last penalty. And here we call your own acts to witness, you who are daily presiding at the trials of prisoners, and passing sentence upon crimes. Well, in your long lists of those accused of many and various atrocities, has any assassin, any cutpurse, any man guilty of sacrilege, or seduction, or stealing bathers' clothes, his name entered as being a Christian too? Or when Christians are brought before you on the mere ground of their name, is there ever found among them an ill-doer of the sort? It is always with your folk the prison is steaming, the mines are sighing, the wild beasts are fed: it is from you the exhibitors of gladiatorial shows always get their herds of criminals to feed up for the occasion. You find no Christian there, except



simply as being such; or if one is there as something else, a Christian he is no longer.

We, then, alone are without crime. Is there ought wonderful in that, if it be a very necessity with us? For a necessity indeed it is. Taught of God Himself what goodness is, we have both a perfect knowledge of it as revealed to us by a perfect Master; and faithfully we do His will, as enjoined on us by a Judge we dare not despise. But your ideas of virtue you have got from mere human opinion; on human authority, too, its obligation rests: hence your system of practical morality is deficient, both in the fulness and authority requisite to produce a life of real virtue. Man's wisdom to point out what is good, is no greater than his authority to exact the keeping of it; the one is as easily deceived as the other is despised. And so, which is the ampler rule, to say, "Thou shalt not kill," or to teach, "Be not even angry?" Which is more perfect, to forbid adultery, or to restrain from even a single lustful look? Which indicates the higher intelligence, interdicting evil-doing, or evil-speaking? Which is more thorough, not allowing an injury, or not even suffering an injury done to you to be repaid?

Though withal you know that these very laws also of yours, which seem to lead to virtue, have been borrowed from the law of God as the ancient model. Of the age of Moses we have already spoken. But what was the real authority of human laws, when it is in man's power both to evade them, by generally managing to hide himself out of sight in his crimes, and to despise them sometimes, if inclination or necessity leads him to offend?

Think of these things, too, in the light of the brevity of any punishment you can inflict—never to last longer than till death. On this ground Epicurus makes light of all suffering and pain, maintaining that if it is small, it is contemptible; and if it is great, it is not long continued. No doubt about it, we, who receive our awards under the judgment of an all-seeing God, and who look forward to eternal punishment from Him for sin,—we alone make real effort to attain a blameless life, under the influence of our ampler knowledge, and the impossibility of concealment, and the

greatness of the threatened torment, not merely long-enduring, but everlasting, fearing Him, whom he too should fear who the fearing judges,—fearing God, I mean, and not the proconsul.

We have sufficiently met, as I think, the accusation of the various crimes on the ground of which these fierce demands are made for Christian blood. We have made a full exhibition of our case; and we have shown you how we are able to prove that our statement is correct, from the trustworthiness, I mean, and antiquity of our sacred writings, from the confession likewise of the powers of spiritual wickedness themselves. Who will venture to undertake our refutation, not with skill of words, but, as we have managed our demonstration, on the basis of reality? But while the truth we hold is made clear to all, unbelief meanwhile, at the very time it is convinced of the worth of Christianity, which has now become well known for its benefits as well as from the intercourse of life, takes up the notion that it is not really a thing divine, but rather a kind of philosophy. These are the very things, it says, the philosophers counsel and profess—innocence, justice, patience, sobriety, chastity. Why, then, are we not permitted an equal liberty and impunity for our doctrines as they have, with whom, in respect of what we teach, we are compared? or why are not they, as so like us, not pressed to the same offices for declining which our lives are imperilled? For who compels a philosopher to sacrifice or take an oath, or put out useless lamps at midday? Nay, they openly overthrow your gods, and in their writings they attack your superstitions; and you applaud them for it. Many of them even, with your countenance, bark out against your rulers, and they are rewarded with statues and salaries, instead of being given to the wild beasts.

And very right it should be so. For they are called philosophers, not Christians. This name of philosopher has no power to put demons to the rout. Why are they not able to do that too? since philosophers count demons inferior to gods. Socrates used to say, "If the demon grant permission." Yet he, too, though in denying the existence of your divinities he had a glimpse of the truth, at his dying ordered

a cock to be sacrificed to Æsculapius, I believe in honour of his father, for Apollo pronounced Socrates the wisest of men. Thoughtless Apollo! testifying to the wisdom of the man who denied the existence of his race. In proportion to the enmity the truth awakens, you give offence by faithfully standing by it; but the man who corrupts and makes a mere pretence of it, precisely on this ground gains favour with its persecutors.

The truth which philosophers, these mockers and corrupters of it, with hostile ends merely affect to hold, and in doing so deprave, caring for nought but glory, Christians both intensely and intimately long for and maintain in its integrity, as those who have a real concern about their salvation. So that we are like each other neither in our knowledge nor our ways, as you imagine. For what certain information did Thales, the first of natural philosophers, give in reply to the inquiry of Cræsus regarding Deity, the delay for further thought so often proving in vain? There is not a Christian workman but finds out God, and manifests Him, and hence assigns to Him all those attributes which go to constitute a divine being, though Plato affirms that it is far from easy to discover the Maker of the universe; and when He is found, it is difficult to make Him known to all.

But if we challenge you to comparison in the virtue of chastity, I turn to a part of the sentence passed by the Athenians against Socrates, who was pronounced a corrupter of youth. The Christian confines himself to the female sex. I have read also how the harlot Phryne kindled in Diogenes the fires of lust, and how a certain Speusippus, of Plato's school, perished in the adulterous act. The Christian husband has nothing to do with any but his own wife. Democritus, in putting out his eyes, because he could not look on women without lusting after them, and was pained if his passion was not satisfied, owns plainly, by the punishment he inflicts, his incontinence. But a Christian with grace-healed eyes is sightless in the matter; he is mentally blind against the assaults of passion.

If I maintain our superior modesty of behaviour, there at once occurs to me Diogenes with filth-covered feet tram-

pling on the proud couches of Plato, under the influence of another pride; the Christian does not even play the proud man to the pauper. If sobriety of spirit be the virtue in debate, why, there are Pythagoras at Thurii, and Zeno at Priene, ambitious of the supreme power: the Christian does not aspire to the ædileship. If equanimity be the contention, you have Lycurgus choosing death by self-starvation, because the Lacons had made some emendation to his laws: the Christian, even when he is condemned, gives thanks. If the comparison be made in regard to trustworthiness, Anaxagoras denied the deposit of his enemies: the Christian is noted for his fidelity even among those who are not of his religion. If the matter of sincerity is to be brought to trial, Aristotle basely thrust his friend Hermias from his place: the Christian does no harm even to his foe. With equal baseness does Aristotle play the sycophant to Alexander, instead of exercising his influence to keep him in the right way, and Plato allows himself to be bought by Dionysius for his belly's sake. Aristippus in the purple, with all his great show of gravity, gives way to extravagance; and Hippias is put to death laying plots against the state: no Christian ever attempted such a thing in behalf of his brethren, even when persecution was scattering them abroad with every atrocity.

But it will be said that some of us, too, depart from the rules of our discipline. In that case, however, we count them no longer Christians; but the philosophers who do such things retain still the name and the honour of wisdom. So, then, where is there any likeness between the Christian and the philosopher? between the disciple of Greece and of heaven? between the man whose object is fame, and whose object is life? between the talker and the doer? between the man who builds up and the man who pulls down? between the friend and the foe of error? between one who corrupts the truth, and one who restores and teaches it? between its thief and its custodian?

Unless I am utterly mistaken, there is nothing so old as the truth; and the already proved antiquity of the divine writings is so far of use to me, that it leads men more easily



to take it in that they are the treasure-source whence all later wisdom has been taken. And were it not necessary to keep my work to a moderate size, I might launch forth also into the proof of this. What poet or sophist has not drunk at the fountain of the prophets? Thence, accordingly, the philosophers watered their arid minds, so that it is the things they have from us which bring us into comparison with them. For this reason, I imagine, philosophy was banished by certain states—I mean by the Thebans, by the Spartans also, and the Argives—its disciples sought to imitate our doctrines; and ambitious, as I have said, of glory and eloquence alone, if they fell upon anything in the collection of sacred Scriptures which displeased them, in their own peculiar style of research, they perverted it to serve their purposes: for they had no adequate faith in their divinity to keep them from changing them, nor had they any sufficient understanding of them either, as being still at the time under veil—even obscure to the Jews themselves, whose peculiar possession they seemed to be.

For so, too, if the truth was distinguished by its simplicity, the more on that account the fastidiousness of man, too proud to believe, set to altering it; so that even what they found certain they made uncertain by their admixtures. Finding a simple revelation of God, they proceeded to dispute about Him, not as He had been revealed to them, but turned aside to debate about His properties, His nature, His abode. Some assert Him to be incorporeal; others maintain He has a body,—the Platonists teaching the one doctrine, and the Stoics the other. Some think that He is composed of atoms, others of numbers: such are the different views of Epicurus and Pythagoras. One thinks He is made of fire; so it appeared to Heraclitus. The Platonists, again, hold that He administers the affairs of the world; the Epicureans, on the contrary, that He is idle and inactive, and, so to speak, a nobody in human things. Then the Stoics represent Him as placed outside the world, and whirling round this huge mass from without like a potter; while the Platonists place Him within the world, as a pilot is in the ship he steers. So, in like manner, they differ in their views about the



world itself, whether it is created or uncreated, whether it is destined to pass away or to remain for ever. So again it is debated concerning the nature of the soul, which some contend is divine and eternal, while others hold that it is dissoluble. According to each one's fancy, He has either introduced something new, or refashioned the old.

Nor need we wonder if the speculations of philosophers have perverted the older Scriptures. Some of their brood, with their opinions, have even adulterated our new-given Christian revelation, and corrupted it into a system of philosophic doctrines, and from the one path have struck off many and inexplicable by-roads. And I have alluded to this, lest any one becoming acquainted with the variety of parties among us, this might seem to him to put us on a level with the philosophers, and he might condemn the truth from the different ways in which it is defended. But we at once put in a plea in bar against these tainters of our purity, asserting that that is the rule of truth which comes down from Christ by transmission through His companions, to whom we shall prove that those devisers of different doctrines are all posterior.

Everything opposed to the truth has been got up from the truth itself, the spirits of error carrying on this system of opposition. By them all corruptions of wholesome discipline have been secretly instigated; by them, too, certain fables have been introduced, that, by their resemblance to the truth, they might impair its credibility, or vindicate their own higher claims to faith; so that people might think Christians unworthy of credit because the poets or philosophers are so, or might regard the poets and philosophers as worthier of confidence from their not being followers of Christ. Accordingly, we get ourselves laughed at for proclaiming that God will one day judge the world. For, like us, the poets and philosophers set up a judgment-seat in the realms below. And if we threaten Gehenna, which is a reservoir of secret fire under the earth for purposes of punishment, we have in the same way derision heaped on us. For so, too, they have their Pyriphlegethon, a river of flame in the regions of the dead. And if we speak of Paradise, the place of heavenly

bliss appointed to receive the spirits of the saints, severed from the knowledge of this world by that fiery zone as by a sort of enclosure, the Elysian plains have taken possession of their faith.

Whence is it, I pray you, that you have all this, so like us, in the poets and philosophers? The reason simply is, that they have been taken from our religion. But if they are taken from our sacred things, as being of earlier date, then ours are the truer, and have higher claims upon belief, since even their imitations find faith among you. If they maintain their sacred mysteries to have sprung from their own minds, in that case ours will be reflections of what are later than themselves, which by the nature of things is impossible. For never does the shadow precede the body which casts it, or the image the reality.

Come now, if some philosopher affirms, as Laberius holds, following an opinion of Pythagoras, that a man may have his origin from a mule, a serpent from a woman, and with skill of speech twists every argument to prove his view, will he not gain acceptance for it, and work in some the conviction that, on account of this, they should even abstain from eating animal food? May any one have the persuasion that he should so abstain, lest by chance in his beef he eats of some ancestors of his? But if a Christian promises the return of a man from a man, and the very actual Gaius from Gaius, the cry of the people will be to have him stoned; they will not even so much as grant him a hearing. If there is any ground for the moving to and fro of human souls into different bodies, why may they not return into the very substance they have left, seeing this is to be restored, to be that which had been? They are no longer the very things they had been; for they could not be what they were not, without first ceasing to be what they had been.

If we were inclined to give all rein upon this point, discussing into what various beasts one and another might probably be changed, we would need at our leisure to take up many points. But this we would do chiefly in our own defence, as setting forth what is greatly worthier of belief, that a man will come back from a man, any given person from any given

person, still retaining his humanity; so that the soul, with its qualities unchanged, may be restored to the same condition, though not to the same outward framework. Assuredly, as the reason why restoration takes place at all is the appointed judgment, every man must needs come forth the very same who had once existed, that he may receive at God's hands a judgment, whether of good desert or the opposite. And therefore the body too will appear; for the soul is not capable of suffering without the solid substance, that is, the flesh; and for this reason also, that it is not right that souls should have all the wrath of God to bear: they did not sin without the body, within which all was done by them.

But how, you say, can a substance which has been dissolved be made to reappear again? Consider thyself, O man, and thou wilt believe in it! Reflect on what you were before you came into existence. Nothing. For if you had been anything, you would have remembered it. You, then, who were nothing before you existed, reduced to nothing also when you cease to be, why may you not come into being again out of nothing, at the will of the same Creator whose will created you out of nothing at the first? Will it be anything new in your case? You who were not, *were* made; when you cease to be again, you *shall* be made. Explain, if you can, your original creation, and then demand to know how you shall be re-created. Indeed, it will be still easier surely to make you what you were once, when the very same creative power made you without difficulty what you never were before.

There will be doubts, perhaps, as to the power of God, of Him who hung in its place this huge body of our world, made out of what had never existed, as from a death of emptiness and inanity, animated by the Spirit who quickens all living things, its very self the unmistakable type of the resurrection, that it might be to you a witness—nay, the exact image of the resurrection. Light, every day extinguished, shines out again; and, with like alternation, darkness succeeds light's outgoing. The defunct stars re-live; the seasons, as soon as they are finished, renew their course; the fruits are brought to maturity, and then are reproduced. The seeds

do not spring up with abundant produce, save as they rot and dissolve away;—all things are preserved by perishing, all things are refashioned out of death. Thou, man of nature so exalted, if thou understandest thyself, taught even by the Pythian<sup>1</sup> words, lord of all these things that die and rise,—shalt thou die to perish evermore? Wherever your dissolution shall have taken place, whatever material agent has destroyed you, or swallowed you up, or swept you away, or reduced you to nothingness, it shall again restore you. Even nothingness is His who is Lord of *all*.

You ask, Shall we then be always dying, and rising up from death? If so the Lord of all things had appointed, you would have to submit, though unwillingly, to the law of your creation. But, in fact, He has no other purpose than that of which He has informed us. The reason which made the universe out of diverse elements, so that all things might be composed of opposite substances in unity—of void and solid, of animate and inanimate, of comprehensible and incomprehensible, of light and darkness, of life itself and death—has also disposed time into order, by fixing and distinguishing its mode, according to which this first portion of it, which we inhabit from the beginning of the world, flows down by a temporal course to a close; but the portion which succeeds, and to which we look forward, continues for ever. When, therefore, the boundary and limit, that millennial interspace, has been passed, when even the outward fashion of the world itself—which has been spread like a veil over the eternal economy, equally a thing of time—passes away, then the whole human race shall be raised again, to have its dues meted out according as it has merited in the period of good or evil, and thereafter to have these paid out through the immeasurable ages of eternity.

And therefore after this there is neither death nor repeated resurrections, but we shall be the same that we are now, and still unchanged—the servants of God, ever with God, clothed upon with the proper substance of eternity; but the profane, and all who are not true worshippers of God, in like manner

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<sup>1</sup> “Know thyself.”



consigned to the punishment of everlasting fire—that fire which, from its very nature indeed, directly ministers to their incorruptibility. The philosophers are familiar as well as we with the distinction between a common and a secret fire. Thus that which is in common use is far different from that which we see in divine judgments, whether striking as thunderbolts from heaven, or bursting up out of the earth through mountain-tops; for it does not consume what it scorches, but while it burns it repairs. So the mountains continue ever burning; and a person struck by lightning is even now kept safe from any destroying flame. A notable proof this of the fire eternal! a notable example of the endless judgment which still supplies punishment with fuel! The mountains burn, and last. How will it be with the wicked and the enemies of God?

These are what are called presumptuous speculations in our case alone; in the philosophers and poets they are regarded as sublime speculations and illustrious discoveries. They are men of wisdom, we are fools. They are worthy of all honour, we are folk to have the finger pointed at; nay, besides that, we are even to have punishments inflicted on us. But let things which are the defence of virtue, if you will, have no foundation, and give them duly the name of fancies, yet still they are necessary; let them be absurd if you will, yet they are of use: they make all who believe them better men and women, under the fear of never-ending punishment and the hope of never-ending bliss.

It is not, then, wise to brand as false, nor to regard as absurd, things the truth of which it is expedient to presume. On no ground is it right positively to condemn as bad what beyond all doubt is profitable. Thus, in fact, you are guilty of the very presumption of which you accuse us, in condemning what is useful. It is equally out of the question to regard them as nonsensical; at any rate, if they are false and foolish, they hurt nobody. For they are just (in that case) like many other things on which you inflict no penalties—foolish and fabulous things, I mean, which, as quite innocuous, are never charged as crimes or punished. But in a thing of the kind, if this be so indeed, we should be adjudged to ridicule,



not to swords, and flames, and crosses, and wild beasts, in which iniquitous cruelty not only the blinded populace exults and insults over us, but in which some of you too glory, not scrupling to gain the popular favour by your injustice. As though all you can do to us, did not depend upon our pleasure. It is assuredly a matter of my own inclination being a Christian. Your condemnation, then, will only reach me in that case, if I wish to be condemned; but when all you can do to me, you can do only at my will, all you can do is dependent on my will, and is not in your power. The joy of the people in our trouble is therefore utterly reasonless. For it is our joy they appropriate to themselves, since we would far rather be condemned than apostatize from God; on the contrary, our haters should be sorry rather than rejoice, as we have obtained the very thing of our own choice.

In that case, you say, why do you complain of our persecutions? You ought rather to be grateful to us for giving you the sufferings you want. Well, it is quite true that it is our desire to suffer, but it is the way the soldier longs for war. No one indeed suffers willingly, since suffering necessarily implies fear and danger. Yet the man who objected to the conflict, both fights with all his strength, and when victorious, he rejoices in the battle, because he reaps from it glory and spoil. It is our battle to be summoned to your tribunals, that there, under fear of execution, we may battle for the truth. But the day is won when the object of the struggle is gained. This victory of ours gives us the glory of pleasing God, and the spoil of life eternal.

But we are overcome. Yes, when we have obtained our wishes. Therefore we conquer in dying; we go forth victorious at the very time we are subdued. Call us, if you like, *Sarmenticci* and *Semaxii*, because, bound to a half-axle stake, we are burned in a circle-heap of fagots. This is the attitude in which we conquer, it is our victory-robe, it is for us a sort of triumphal car. Naturally enough, therefore, we do not please the vanquished; on account of this, indeed, we are counted a desperate, reckless race. But the very desperation and recklessness you object to in us, among yourselves lift high the standard of virtue in the cause of glory and of fame.

Mucius of his own will left his right hand on the altar: what sublimity of mind! Empedocles gave his whole body at Catana to the fires of Ætna: what mental resolution! A certain foundress of Carthage gave himself away in second marriage to the funeral pile: what a noble witness of her chastity! Regulus, not wishing that his one life should count for the lives of many enemies, endured these crosses over all his frame: how brave a man—even in captivity a conqueror! Anaxarchus, when he was being beaten to death by a barley-pounder, cried out, "Beat on, beat on at the case of Anaxarchus; no stroke falls on Anaxarchus himself." O magnanimity of the philosopher, who even in such an end had jokes upon his lips!

I omit all reference to those who with their own sword, or with any other milder form of death, have bargained for glory. Nay, see how even torture contests are crowned by you. The Athenian courtesan, having wearied out the executioner, at last bit off her tongue and spat it in the face of the raging tyrant, that she might at the same time spit away her power of speech, nor be able longer to confess her fellow-conspirators, if even overcome, that might be her inclination. Zeno the Eleatic, when he was asked by Dionysius what good philosophy did, on answering that it gave contempt of death, was, all unquailing, given over to the tyrant's scourge, and sealed his opinion even to the death. We all know how the Spartan lash, applied with the utmost cruelty under the very eyes of friends encouraging, confers on those who bear it honour proportionate to the blood which the young men shed. O glory legitimate, because it is human, for whose sake it is counted neither reckless foolhardiness, nor desperate obstinacy, to despise death itself and all sorts of savage treatment, for whose sake you may for your native place, for the empire, for friendship, endure all you are forbidden to do for God! And you cast statues in honour of persons such as these, and you put inscriptions upon images, and cut out epitaphs on tombs, that their names may never perish. In so far as you can by your monuments, you yourselves afford a sort of resurrection to the dead. Yet he who expects the true resurrection from God, is insane if for God he suffers!

But go zealously on, good presidents, you will stand higher with the people if you sacrifice the Christians at their wish, kill us, torture us, condemn us, grind us to dust; your injustice is the proof that we are innocent. Therefore it is of God's permitting, not of your mere will, that we thus suffer. For but very lately, in condemning a Christian woman to the pimp rather than to the lion, you made confession that a taint on our purity is considered among us something more terrible than any punishment and any death.

Nor does your cruelty, however exquisite, avail you; it is rather a temptation to us. The oftener we are mown down by you, the more in number we grow; the blood of Christians is seed. Many of your writers exhort to the courageous bearing of pain and death, as Cicero in the *Tusculans*, as Seneca in his *Chances*, as Diogenes, Pyrrus, Callinicus. And yet their words do not find so many disciples as Christians do, teachers not by words, but by their deeds. That very obstinacy you rail against is the preceptress. For who that contemplates it is not excited to inquire what is at the bottom of it? who, after inquiry, does not embrace our doctrines? and when he has embraced them, desires not to suffer that he may become partaker of the fulness of God's grace, that he may obtain from God complete forgiveness, by giving in exchange his blood? For that secures the remission of all offences. On this account it is that we return thanks on the very spot for your sentences. As the divine and human are ever opposed to each other, when we are condemned by you, we are acquitted by the Highest.

THE CONFESSIONS  
OF  
ST. AUGUSTINE  

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HIS CONVERSION  

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*TRANSLATED BY*  
E. B. PUSEY, D.D.

*WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE SAME ON*  
ST. AUGUSTINE, DEFENDER OF THE FAITH





## INTRODUCTION

### ST. AUGUSTINE, DEFENDER OF THE FAITH

THE "Confessions of St. Augustine" have been translated again and again into almost every European language, and in all loved. One may quote two sayings, prefixed to a French edition, and which bear evident marks of sincerity: "O how I wish the Confessions were familiar to all who hear me, that they would read and re-read them unceasingly. For there is no book in the world more capable to take away the human heart from the vain, passing, perishable things, which the world presents, and to cure self-love. I have known it but too late, and cease not to grieve thereat." Another says, "The Confessions of St. Augustine are, of all his works, that which is most filled with the fire of the love of God, and most calculated to kindle it in the heart; the most full of unction, and most capable to impart it; and where one best sees how faithfully and carefully this holy man recorded all the blessings which he had received from the mercy of God."

The subject of the Confessions would naturally give them a deep interest, presenting, as they do, an account of the way in which God led, perhaps the most powerful mind of Christian antiquity, out of darkness into light, and changed one, who was a chosen vessel unto Himself, from a heretic and a seducer of the brethren, into one of the most energetic defenders of Catholic Truth, both against the strange sect to which he had belonged, and against the Arians, Pelagians, and semi-Pelagians, Donatists, Priscillianists. Such, not an autobiography, is the object of the Confessions; a praise and confession of God's unmerited goodness, but of himself only so much, as might illustrate out of what depth God's mercy had raised him.

Although his subject is God's mercies to himself, himself

is the subject which he least likes to dwell upon; and, most probably, upon analyzing the Confessions, would be surprised to find the comparative paucity of details, which they contain. For his principle being not to convey notices of himself, but to praise God on occasion of what had happened to him or in him, he does not accumulate instances of his own wickedness, but rather singles out particular acts as instances or specimens of a class, and as furnishing occasion to enquire into the nature of, or temptations to, such arts. The "Confessions" then rather contain a general sketch of his unconverted life, illustrated by some particular instances, than a regular biography. The details, on the other hand, which he gives as to his friend Alypius, remarkably illustrate this absence of egotism, as does the brief sentence in which he relates his conversion, "Alypius, who always differed much from me for the better, without much turbulent delay, joined me."

This perhaps is it (next to the vivid account of his conversion, or the beautiful history of the last days of his mother) which has given such an abiding interest to the Confessions. With extreme naturalness, (as one to whom absence of self had become nature,) he passes at once from the immediate subject or fact to the principles with which it is connected, thus giving instruction as to man, or rising to the reverent, though eloquent, or rather to the eloquent, because reverent, praise of God. Thus his youthful sin in robbing the pear tree gives the occasion of enquiring into the nature of sins, committed without apparent temptation; the loss of his friend, into the nature and real cure of grief; his dedication of an early work to one known by reputation only, into the interest we bear to persons so known; the effect produced by the jollity of a drunken beggar, into the nature of joy and the like; yet on all occasions ending not in these inquiries, but naturally rising up to God, who alone can explain what is mysterious, satisfy our longings, restore what is defective, fill up what is void, or rather viewing every thing habitually in God's sight and in His light, and so, from time to time leading the reader more sensibly into His Presence, in which himself unceasingly lived and thought.

The same reference to principles gives interest to his allu-

sions to the Manichæans, whom, as being at that time formidable to the unstable, though now a forgotten heresy, he never notices without furnishing opposite and corrective principles. The value of these remains, as lying at the root of the difficulty or temptation, which then gained proselytes to Manicheism; the inward bane and antidote being the same in different ages, though Satan disguises his temptations differently according to the varying characters of the ages, people, and climate. The principles upon which St. Augustine meets the Manichæan cavils against the Old Testament, may be of use in this day to a class, which appears in a form outwardly very different; as may the observations, (founded in part upon his own experience,) on the effect of any one indulged error to prevent the reception of other truth.

It must never be lost sight of, in reference to this whole story of St. Augustine, that he himself was, during the whole period, not a Christian, for he was not baptized; his mother had been given in marriage to one, who was altogether a heathen, until long after Augustine's birth, (for in his sixteenth year his father was but recently a Catechumen, b. ii. sec. 6.) and, as a heathen, lived in heathenish sin; and himself, although in infancy made a Catechumen, had fallen into a sect, which could in no way be called Christian. Christianity, as now in India, was then every where surrounded by Heathenism, which it was gradually leavening, and there was consequently a mixed race, born of intermarriages with the heathen, or of parents who had not made up their minds to become wholly Christians, (like the "mixed multitude," which went up with Israel out of Egypt,) and who were in a sort of twilight state, seeing Christianity but very imperfectly, although the grossness of their own darkness was much mitigated. This should be borne in mind, lest any should think that St. Augustine's descriptions of himself and his comrades furnish any representation of the then state of the Christian Church.

## CONFESSIONS OF ST. AUGUSTINE

### HIS CONVERSION

As a boy I had already heard of an eternal life, promised us through the humility of the Lord our God stooping to our pride; and even from the womb of my mother, who greatly hoped in Thee, I was sealed with the mark of His cross and salted with His salt.<sup>1</sup> Thou sawest, Lord, how while yet a boy, being seized on a time with sudden oppression of the stomach, and like near to death—Thou sawest, my God, (for Thou wert my keeper,) with what eagerness and what faith I sought, from the pious care of my mother and Thy Church, the mother of us all, the baptism of Thy Christ my God and Lord. Whereupon the mother of my flesh, being much troubled, (since, with a heart pure in Thy faith, she even more lovingly *travailed in birth* of my salvation,) would in eager haste have provided for my consecration and cleansing by the healthgiving sacraments, confessing Thee, Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins, unless I had suddenly recovered. And so, as if I must needs be again polluted should I live, my cleansing was deferred, because the defilements of sin would, after that washing, bring greater and more perilous guilt. I then already believed; and my mother, and the whole household, except my father: yet did not he prevail over the power of my mother's piety in me, that as he did not yet believe, so neither should I. For it was her earnest care, that Thou my God, rather than he, shouldest be my father; and in this Thou didst aid her to prevail over her husband, whom she, the better, obeyed, therein also obeying Thee, who hast so commanded.

I beseech Thee, my God, I would fain know, if so Thou

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<sup>1</sup> A rite in the Western Churches, on admission as a Catechumen, previous to Baptism, denoting the purity and uncorruptedness and discretion required of Christians.

willest, for what purpose my baptism was then deferred? Was it for my good that the rein was laid loose, as it were, upon me, for me to sin? or was it not laid loose? If not, why does it still echo in our ears on all sides, "Let him alone, let him do as he will, for he is not yet baptized?" but as to bodily health, no one says, "Let him be worse wounded, for he is not yet healed." How much better then, had I been at once healed; and then, by my friends' diligence and my own, my soul's recovered health had been kept safe in Thy keeping who gavest it. Better truly. But how many and great waves of temptation seemed to hang over me after my boyhood! These my mother foresaw; and preferred to expose to them the clay whence I might afterwards be moulded, than the very cast, when made.<sup>1</sup>

In boyhood itself, however, (so much less dreaded for me than youth,) I loved not study, and hated to be forced to it. Yet I was forced; and this was well done towards me, but I did not well; for, unless forced, I had not learnt. But no one doth well against his will, even though what he doth, be well. Yet neither did they well who forced me, but what was well came to me from Thee, my God. For they were regardless how I should employ what they forced me to learn, except to satiate the insatiate desires of a wealthy beggary, and a shameful glory. But Thou, *by whom the very hairs of our head are numbered*, didst use for my good the error of all who urged me to learn; and my own, who would not learn, Thou didst use for my punishment—a fit penalty for one, so small a boy and so great a sinner. So by those who did not well, Thou didst well for me; and by my own sin Thou didst justly punish me. For Thou hast commanded, and so it is, that every inordinate affection should be its own punishment.

But why did I so much hate the Greek, which I studied as a boy? I do not yet fully know. For the Latin I loved; not what my first masters, but what the so-called grammarians taught me. For those first lessons, reading, writing,

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<sup>1</sup> His unregenerate nature, on which the image of God was not yet impressed, rather than the regenerate.



and arithmetic, I thought as great a burden and penalty as any Greek. And yet whence was this too, but from the sin and vanity of this life, *because I was flesh, and a breath that passeth away and cometh not again?* For those first lessons were better certainly, because more certain; by them I obtained, and still retain, the power of reading what I find written, and myself writing what I will; whereas in the others, I was forced to learn the wanderings of one Æneas, forgetful of my own, and to weep for dead Dido, because she killed herself for love; the while, with dry eyes, I endured my miserable self dying among these things, far from Thee, O God my life.

For what more miserable than a miserable being who commiserates not himself; weeping the death of Dido for love to Æneas, but weeping not his own death for want of love to Thee, O God. Thou light of my heart, Thou bread of my inmost soul, Thou Power who givest vigour to my mind, who quickenest my thoughts, I loved Thee not. I committed fornication against Thee, and all around me thus fornicating there echoed "Well done! well done!" *for the friendship of this world is fornication against Thee*; and "Well done! well done!" echoes on till one is ashamed not to be thus a man. And all this I wept not, I who wept for Dido slain, and "seeking by the sword a stroke and wound extreme," myself seeking the while a worse extreme, the extremest and lowest of thy creatures, having forsaken Thee, earth passing into the earth. And if forbid to read all this, I was grieved that I might not read what grieved me. Madness like this is thought a higher and a richer learning, than that by which I learned to read and write.

But now, my God, cry Thou aloud in my soul; and let Thy truth tell me, "Not so, not so. Far better was that first study." For, lo, I would readily forget the wanderings of Æneas and all the rest, rather than how to read and write. But over the entrance of the Grammar School is a vail<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The "vail" was an emblem of honour, used in places of worship, and subsequently in courts of law, Emperors' palaces, and even private houses. That between the vestibule, or *proscholium*, and the

drawn! true; yet is this not so much an emblem of aught recondite, as a cloke of error. Let not those, whom I no longer fear, cry out against me, while I confess to Thee, my God, whatever my soul will, and acquiesce in the condemnation of my evil ways, that I may love Thy good ways. Let not either buyers or sellers of grammar-learning cry out against me. For I question them whether it be true, that Æneas came on a time to Carthage, as the Poet tells, the less learned will reply that they know not, the more learned that he never did. But should I ask with what letters the name "Æneas" is written, every one who has learnt this will answer me aright, as to the signs which men have conventionally settled. If, again, I should ask, which might be forgotten with least detriment to the concerns of life, reading and writing or these poetic fictions? who does not foresee, what all must answer who have not wholly forgotten themselves? I sinned, then, when as a boy I preferred those empty to those more profitable of studies, or rather loved the one and hated the other. "One and one, two;" "two and two, four;" this was to me a hateful sing-song: "the wooden horse lined with armed men," and "the burning of Troy," and "Creusa's shade and sad similitude," were the choice spectacle of my vanity.

Why then did I hate the Greek classics, which have the like tales? For Homer also curiously wove the like fictions, and is most sweetly-vain, yet was he bitter to my boyish taste. And so I suppose would Virgil be to Grecian children, when forced to learn him as I was Homer. Difficulty, in truth, the difficulty of a foreign tongue, dashed, as it were, with gall all the sweetness of Grecian fable. For not one word of it did I understand, and to make me understand I was urged vehemently with cruel threats and punishments. Time was also, (as an infant,) I knew no Latin; but this I learned without fear of suffering, by mere observation, amid the caresses of

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school itself, besides being a mark of dignity, may, as S. Aug. perhaps implies, have been intended to denote the hidden mysteries taught therein, and that the mass of mankind were not fit hearers of truth.

my nursery and jests of friends, smiling and sportively encouraging me. This I learned without any pressure of punishment to urge me on, for my heart urged me to give birth to its conceptions, which I could only do by learning words not of those who taught, but of those who talked with me; in whose ears also I gave birth to the thoughts, whatever I conceived. No doubt then, that a free curiosity has more force in our learning these things, than a frightful enforcement. Only this enforcement restrains the roving of that freedom, through Thy laws, O my God, Thy laws, from the master's cane to the martyr's trials, being able to temper for us a wholesome bitter, recalling us to Thyself from that deadly pleasure which lures us from Thee.

Hear, Lord, my prayer; let not my soul faint under Thy discipline, nor let me faint in confessing unto Thee all Thy mercies, whereby Thou hast drawn me out of all my most evil ways, that Thou mightest become a delight to me above all the allurements which I once pursued; that I may most entirely love Thee, and clasp Thy hand with all my affections, and Thou mayest yet rescue me from every temptation, even unto the end. For, lo, O Lord, my King and my God, for Thy service be whatever useful thing my childhood learned; for Thy service, that I speak—write—read—reckon. For Thou didst grant me Thy discipline, while I was learning vanities; and my sin of delighting in those vanities Thou hast forgiven. In them, indeed, I learnt many a useful word, but these may as well be learned in things not vain; and that is the safe path for the steps of youth.

But woe is thee, thou torrent of human custom! Who shall stand against thee? How long shalt thou not be dried up? How long roll the sons of Eve into that huge and hideous ocean, which even they scarcely overpass who climb the cross? Did not I read in thee of Jove the thunderer and the adulterer? Both, doubtless, he could not be; but so the feigned thunder might countenance and pander to real adultery. And now which of our gowned masters, lends a sober ear to one<sup>1</sup> who from their own school cries out, "These were Homer's

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<sup>1</sup> Cic. Tuscul. 1. i. c. 26.

fictions, transferring things human to the gods; would he had brought down things divine to us!" Yet more truly had he said, "These are indeed his fictions; but attributing a divine nature to wicked men, that crimes might be no longer crimes, and whoso commits them might seem to imitate not abandoned men, but the celestial gods."

And yet, thou hellish torrent, into thee are cast the sons of men with rich rewards, for compassing such learning; and a great solemnity is made of it, when this is going on in the forum, within sight of laws appointing a salary beside the scholar's payments; and thou lashest thy rocks and roarest, "Hence words are learnt; hence eloquence; most necessary to gain your ends, or maintain opinions." As if we should have never known such words as "golden shower," "lap," "beguile," "temples of the heavens," or others in that passage, unless Terence had brought a lewd youth upon the stage, setting up Jupiter as his example of seduction.<sup>1</sup>

Viewing a picture, where the tale was drawn,  
Of Jove's descending in a golden shower  
To Danae's lap, a woman to beguile.

And then mark how he excites himself to lust as by celestial authority;

And what God? Great Jove,  
Who shakes heav'n's highest temples with his thunder,  
'And I, poor mortal man, not do the same!  
I did it, and with all my heart I did it.

Not one whit more easily are the words learnt for all this vileness; but by their means the vileness is committed with less shame. Not that I blame the words, being, as it were, choice and precious vessels; but that wine of error which is drunk to us in them by intoxicated teachers; and if we, too, drink not, we are beaten, and have no sober judge to whom we may appeal. Yet, O my God, (in whose presence I now without hurt may remember this,) all this unhappily I learnt

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<sup>1</sup> Coleman's Terence, Eunuch.



willingly with great delight, and for this was pronounced a hopeful boy.

Bear with me, my God, while I say somewhat of my wit, Thy gift, and on what dotages I wasted it. For a task was set me, troublesome enough to my soul, upon terms of praise or shame, and fear of stripes, to speak the words of Juno, as she raged and mourned that she could not

This Trojan prince from Latium turn.

Which words I had heard that Juno never uttered; but we were forced to go astray in the footsteps of these poetic fictions, and to say in prose much what he expressed in verse. And his speaking was most applauded, in whom the passions of rage and grief were most pre-eminent, and clothed in the most fitting language, maintaining the dignity of the character. What is it to me, O my true life, my God, that my declamation was applauded above so many of my own age and class? Is not all this smoke and wind? And was there nothing else whereon to exercise my wit and tongue? Thy praises, Lord, Thy praises might have stayed the yet tender shoot of my heart by the prop of Thy Scriptures; so had it not trailed away amid these empty trifles, a defiled prey for the fowls of the air. For in more ways than one do men sacrifice to the rebellious angels.

But what marvel that I was thus carried away to vanities, and went out from Thy presence, O my God, when men were set before me as models, who, if in relating some action of theirs, in itself not ill, they committed some barbarism or solecism, being censured, were abashed; but when in rich and adorned and well-ordered discourse they related their own disordered life, being bepraised, they gloried? These things Thou seest, Lord, and holdest Thy peace; *long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth*. Wilt Thou hold Thy peace for ever? And even now Thou drawest out of this horrible gulf the soul that seeketh Thee, that thirsteth for Thy pleasures, *whose heart saith unto Thee, I have sought Thy face; Thy face, Lord, will I seek*. For *darkened* affections is removal from Thee. For it is not by our feet, or change of place, that men leave Thee, or return unto Thee. Or did that



Thy younger son look out for horses or chariots, or ships, fly with visible wings, or journey by the motion of his limbs, that he might in a far country waste in riotous living all Thou gavest at his departure? A loving Father, when Thou gavest, and more loving unto him, when he returned empty. So then in lustful, that is, in darkened affections, is the true distance from Thy face.

Behold, O Lord God, yea, behold patiently as Thou art wont, how carefully the sons of men observe the covenanted rules of letters and syllables received from those who spake before them, neglecting the eternal covenant of everlasting salvation received from Thee. Insomuch, that a teacher or learner of the hereditary laws of pronunciation will more offend men, by speaking without the aspirate, of a "*uman* being," in despite of the laws of grammar, than if he, a "*human* being," hate a "*human* being" in despite of Thine. As if any enemy could be more hurtful than the hatred with which he is incensed against him; or could wound more deeply him whom he persecutes, than he wounds his own soul by his enmity. Assuredly no science of letters can be so innate as the record of conscience, "that he is doing to another what from another he would be loth to suffer." How deep are Thy ways, O God, Thou only great, *that sittest silent on high* and by an unwearied law dispensing penal blindness to lawless desires. In quest of the fame of eloquence, a man standing before a human judge, surrounded by a human throng, declaiming against his enemy with fiercest hatred, will take heed most watchfully, lest, by an error of the tongue, he murder the word "*human-being*;" but takes no heed, lest, through the fury of his spirit, he murder the real human being.

This was the world at whose gate unhappy I lay in my boyhood; this the stage, where I had feared more to commit a barbarism, than having committed one, to envy those who had not. These things I speak and confess to Thee, my God; for which I had praise from them, whom I then thought it all virtue to please. For I saw not the abyss of vileness, wherein *I was cast away from Thine eyes*. Before them what more foul than I was already, displeasing even such as myself? with

innumerable lies deceiving my tutor, my masters, my parents, from love of play, eagerness to see vain shows, and restlessness to imitate them! Thefts also I committed, from my parents' cellar and table, enslaved by greediness, or that I might have to give to boys, who sold me their play, which all the while they liked no less than I. In this play, too, I often sought unfair conquests, conquered myself meanwhile by vain desire of pre-eminence. And what could I so ill endure, or, when I detected it, upbraided I so fiercely, as that I was doing to others? and for which if, detected, I was upbraided, I chose rather to quarrel, than to yield. And is this the innocence of boyhood? Not so, Lord, not so; I cry Thy mercy, O my God. For these very sins, as riper years succeed, these very sins are transferred from tutors and masters, from nuts and balls and sparrows, to magistrates and kings, to gold and manors and slaves, just as severer punishments displace the cane. It was the low stature then of childhood, which Thou our King didst commend as an emblem of lowliness, when Thou saidst, *Of such is the kingdom of heaven.*

Yet, Lord, to Thee, the Creator and Governor of the universe, most excellent and most good, thanks were due to Thee our God, even hadst Thou destined for me boyhood only. For even then I was, I lived, and felt; and had an implanted providence over my own well-being,—a trace of that mysterious Unity, whence I was derived;—I guarded by the inward sense the entireness of my senses, and in these minute pursuits, and in my thoughts on things minute, I learnt to delight in truth, I hated to be deceived, had a vigorous memory, was gifted with speech, was soothed by friendship, avoided pain, baseness, ignorance. In so small a creature, what was not wonderful, not admirable? But all are gifts of my God; it was not I, who gave them me; and good these are, and these together are myself. Good, then, is He that made me, and He is my good; and before Him will I exult for every good which of a boy I had. For it was my sin, that not in Him, but in His creatures—myself and others—I sought for pleasures, sublimities, truths, and so fell headlong into sorrows, confusions, errors. Thanks be to Thee, my joy and my glory and my confidence, my God, thanks be to Thee for Thy gifts; but do

Thou preserve them to me. For so wilt Thou preserve me, and those things shall be enlarged and perfected, which Thou hast given me, and I myself shall be with Thee, since even to be Thou hast given me.

I WILL now call to mind my past foulness, and the carnal corruptions of my soul: not because I love them, but that I may love Thee, O my God. For love of Thy love I do it; reviewing my most wicked ways in the very bitterness of my remembrance, that Thou mayst grow sweet unto me; (Thou sweetness never failing, Thou blissful and assured sweetness;) and gathering me again out of that my dissipation, wherein I was torn piecemeal, while turned from Thee, the One Good, I lost myself among a multiplicity of things. For I even burnt in my youth heretofore, to be satiated in things below; and I dared to grow wild again, with these various and shadowy loves: *my beauty consumed away*, and I stank in Thine eyes; pleasing myself, and desirous to please in the eyes of men.

And what was it that I delighted in, but to love, and be beloved? but I kept not the measure of love, of mind to mind, friendship's bright boundary; but out of the muddy concupiscence of the flesh, and the bubblings of youth, mists fumed up which beclouded and overcast my heart, that I could not discern the clear brightness of love, from the fog of lustfulness. Both did confusedly boil in me, and hurried my unstayed youth over the precipice of unholy desires, and sunk me in a gulf of flagitiousnesses. Thy wrath had gathered over me, and I knew it not. I was grown deaf by the clanking of the chain of my mortality, the punishment of the pride of my soul, and I strayed further from Thee, and Thou lettest me alone, and I was tossed about, and wasted, and dissipated, and I boiled over in my fornications, and Thou heldest Thy peace, O Thou my tardy joy! Thou then heldest Thy peace, and I wandered further and further from Thee, into more and more fruitless seed-plots of sorrows, with a proud dejectedness, and a restless weariness.

Oh! that some one had then attempered my disorder, and turned to account the fleeting beauties of these, the extreme points of Thy creation! had put a bound to their pleasurable-

ness that so the tides of my youth might have cast themselves upon the marriage shore, if they could not be calmed, and kept within the object of a family, as Thy law prescribes, O Lord: who this way formest the offspring of this our death, being able with a gentle hand to blunt the thorns, which were excluded from Thy paradise? For Thy omnipotency is not far from us, even when we be far from Thee. Else ought I more watchfully to have heeded the voice from the clouds; *Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh, but I spare you. And, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. And, he that is unmarried thinketh of the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord; but he that is married careth for the things of this world, how he may please his wife.*

To these words I should have listened more attentively, and being served *for the kingdom of heaven's sake*, had more happily awaited Thy embraces; but I, poor wretch, foamed like a troubled sea, following the rushing of my own tide, forsaking Thee, and exceeded all Thy limits; yet I escaped not Thy scourges. For what mortal can? For Thou wert ever with me mercifully rigorous, and besprinkling with most bitter alloy all my unlawful pleasures: that I might seek pleasures without alloy. But where to find such, I could not discover, save in Thee, O Lord, who *teachest by sorrow*, and woundest us, to heal; and killest us, lest we die from Thee. Where was I, and how far was I exiled from the delights of Thy house, in that sixteenth year of the age of my flesh, when the madness of lust (to which human shamelessness giveth free license, though unlicensed by Thy laws) took the rule over me, and I resigned myself wholly to it? My friends meanwhile took no care by marriage to save my fall; their only care was that I should learn to speak excellently, and be a persuasive orator.

For that year were my studies intermitted: whilst after my return from Madaura,<sup>1</sup> (a neighbour city, whither I had

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<sup>1</sup> Formerly an episcopal city; now a small village. At this time the inhabitants were heathen. S. Aug. calls them "his fathers," in a letter persuading them to embrace the Gospel. Apuleius, author of *The Golden Ass*, was a native of this city.



journeyed to learn grammar and rhetoric,) the expenses for a further journey to Carthage were being provided for me: and that, rather by the resolution than the means of my father, who was but a poor freeman of Thagaste. To whom tell I this? not to Thee, my God; but before Thee to mine own kind, even to that small portion of mankind as may light upon these writings of mine. And to what purpose? that whosoever reads this, may think *out of what depths we are to cry unto Thee*. For what is nearer to Thine ears than a confessing heart, and a life of faith? Who did not extol my father, for that beyond the ability of his means, he would furnish his son with all necessities for a far journey for his studies' sake? For many far abler citizens did no such thing for their children. But yet this same father had no concern, how I grew towards Thee, or how chaste I were; so that I were but copious in speech, however barren I were to Thy culture, O God, who art the only true and good Lord of Thy field, my heart.

But while in that my sixteenth year I lived with my parents, leaving all school for a while, (a season of idleness being interposed through the narrowness of my parents' fortunes,) the briers of unclean desires grew rank over my head, and there was no hand to root them out. When that my father saw me at the baths, now growing toward manhood, and endued with a restless youthfulness, he, as already hence anticipating his descendants, gladly told it to my mother; rejoicing in that tumult of the senses wherein the world forgetteth Thee its Creator, and becometh enamoured of Thy creature, instead of Thyself, through the fumes of that invisible wine of its self-will, turning aside and bowing down to the very basest things. But in my mother's breast Thou hadst already begun Thy temple, and the foundation of Thy holy habitation, whereas my father was as yet but a catechumen, and that but recently. She then was startled with an holy fear and trembling; and though I was not as yet baptized, feared for me those crooked ways, in which they walk, who *turn their back to Thee, and not their face*.

Woe is me! and dare I say that Thou heldest Thy peace, O my God, while I wandered further from Thee? Didst Thou then indeed hold Thy peace to me? And whose but Thine



were these words which by my mother, Thy faithful one, Thou sangest in my ears? Nothing whereof sunk into my heart, so as to do it. For she wished, and I remember in private with great anxiety warned me, "not to commit fornication; but especially never to defile another's wife." These seemed to me womanish advices, which I should blush to obey. But they were Thine, and I knew it not: and I thought Thou wert silent, and that it was she who spake; by whom Thou wert not silent unto me; and in her wast despised by me, her son, *the son of Thy handmaid, Thy servant*. But I knew it not; and ran headlong with such blindness, that amongst my equals I was ashamed of a less shamelessness, when I heard them boast of their flagitiousness, yea, and the more boasting, the more they were degraded: and I took pleasure, not only in the pleasure of the deed, but in the praise. What is worthy of dispraise but Vice? But I made myself worse than I was, that I might not be dispraised; and when in any thing I had not sinned as the abandoned ones, I would say that I had done what I had not done, that I might not seem contemptible in proportion as I was innocent; or of less account, the more chaste.

Behold with what companions I walked the streets of Babylon, and wallowed in the mire thereof, as if in a bed of spices, and precious ointments. And that I might cleave the faster to its very centre, the invisible enemy trod me down, and seduced me, for that I was easy to be seduced. Neither did the mother of my flesh, (who had now *fled out of the centre of Babylon*, yet went more slowly in the skirts thereof,) as she advised me to chastity, so heed what she had heard of me from her husband, as to restrain within the bounds of conjugal affection, (if it could not be pared away to the quick,) what she felt to be pestilent at present, and for the future dangerous. She heeded not this, for she feared, lest a wife should prove a clog and hindrance to my hopes. Not those hopes of the world to come, which my mother reposed in Thee; but the hope of learning, which both my parents were too desirous I should attain; my father, because he had next to no thought of Thee, and of me but vain conceits; my mother, because she accounted that those usual courses of learning would not only be no hindrance, but even some furtherance towards attaining

Thee. For this I conjecture, recalling, as well as I may, the disposition of my parents. The reins, mean time, were slackened to me, beyond all temper of due severity, to spend my time in sport, yea, even unto dissoluteness is whatsoever I affected. And in all was a mist, intercepting from me, O my God, the brightness of Thy truth; and *mine iniquity burst out as from very fatness.*

Theft is punished by Thy law, O Lord, and the law written in the hearts of men, which iniquity itself effaces not. For what thief will abide a thief? not even a rich thief, one stealing through want. Yet I lusted to thief, and did it, compelled by no hunger, nor poverty, but through a cloyedness of welldoing, and a pamperedness of iniquity. For I stole that, of which I had enough, and much better. Nor cared I to enjoy what I stole, but joyed in the theft and sin itself. A pear tree there was near our vineyard, laden with fruit, tempting neither for colour nor taste. To shake and rob this, some lewd young fellows of us went, late one night, (having according to our pestilent custom prolonged our sports in the streets till then,) and took huge loads, not for our eating, but to fling to the very hogs, having only tasted them. And this, but to do, what we liked only, because it was disliked. Behold my heart, O God, behold my heart, which Thou hadst pity upon in the bottom of the bottomless pit. Now, behold let my heart tell Thee, what it sought there, that I should be gratuitously evil, having no temptation to ill, but the ill itself. It was foul, and I loved it; I loved to perish, I loved mine own fault, not that for which I was faulty, but my fault itself. Foul soul, falling from Thy firmament to utter destruction; not seeking aught through the shame, but the shame itself!

For there is an attractiveness in beautiful bodies, in gold and silver, and all things; and in bodily touch, sympathy hath much influence, and each other sense hath his proper object answerably tempered. Wordly honour hath also its grace, and the power of overcoming, and of mastery; whence springs also the thirst of revenge. But yet, to obtain all these, we may not depart from Thee, O Lord, nor decline from Thy law. The life also which here we live hath its own enchantment, through a certain proportion of its own, and a correspondence with all

things beautiful here below. Human friendship also is endeared with a sweet tie, by reason of the unity formed of many souls. Upon occasion of all these, and the like, is sin committed, while through an immoderate inclination towards these goods of the lowest order, the better and higher are forsaken, —Thou, our Lord God, Thy truth, and Thy law. For these lower things have their delights, but not like my God, who made all things: for *in Him doth the righteous delight and He is the joy of the upright in heart.*

When, then, we ask why a crime was done, we believe it not, unless it appear that there might have been some desire of obtaining some of those which we called lower goods, or a fear of losing them. For they are beautiful and comely; although compared with those higher and beatific goods, they be abject and low. A man hath murdered another; why? he loved his wife or his estate; or would rob for his own livelihood; or feared to lose some such thing by him; or, wronged, was on fire to be revenged. Would any commit murder upon no cause, delighted simply in murdering? Who would believe it? For as for that furious and savage man, of whom it is said that he was gratuitously evil and cruel, yet is the cause assigned;<sup>1</sup> “lest” (saith he) “through idleness hand or heart should grow inactive.” And to what end? That, through that practice of guilt, he might, having taken the city, attain to honours, empire, riches, and be freed from fear of the laws, and his embarrassments from domestic needs, and consciousness of villanies. So then, not even Catiline himself loved his own villanies, but something else, for whose sake he did them.

What then did wretched I so love in thee, thou theft of mine, thou deed of darkness, in that sixteenth year of my age? Lovely thou wert not, because thou wert theft. But art thou any thing, that thus I speak to thee? Fair were the pears we stole, because they were Thy creation. Thou fairest of all, Creator of all, Thou good God; God, the sovereign good and my true good. Fair were those pears, but not them did my wretched soul desire; for I had store of better, and those I gathered, only that I might steal. For, when gathered, I flung

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<sup>1</sup> Sallust. Conspiracy of Catiline.

them away, my only feast therein being my own sin, which I was pleased to enjoy. For if aught of those pears came within my mouth, what sweetened it was the sin. And now, O Lord my God, I enquire what in that theft delighted me; and behold it hath no loveliness; I mean not such loveliness as in justice and wisdom; nor such as is in the mind and memory, and senses, and animal life of man; nor yet as the stars are glorious and beautiful in their orbs; or the earth, or sea, full of embryo-life, replacing by its birth that which decayeth; nay, nor even that false and shadowy beauty, which belongeth to deceiving vices. . . .

*What fruit had I then (wretched man!) in those things, of the remembrance whereof I am now ashamed?* Especially, in that theft which I loved for the theft's sake; and it too was nothing, and therefore the more miserable I, who loved it. Yet alone I had not done it: such was I then, I remember, alone I had never done it. I loved then in it also the company of the accomplices, with whom I did it? I did not then love nothing else but the theft, yea rather I did love nothing else; for that circumstance of the company was also nothing. What is, in truth? who can teach me, save He that enlighteneth my heart, and discovereth its dark corners? What is it which hath come into my mind to enquire, and discuss, and consider? For had I then loved the pears I stole, and wished to enjoy them, I might have done it alone, had the bare commission of the theft sufficed to attain my pleasure; nor needed I have inflamed the itching of my desires, by the excitement of accomplices. But since my pleasure was not in those pears, it was in the offence itself, which the company of fellow-sinners occasioned.

What then was this feeling? For of a truth it was too foul: and woe was me, who had it. But yet what was it? *Who can understand his errors?* It was the sport, which, as it were, tickled our hearts, that we beguiled, those who little thought what we were doing, and much disliked it. Why then was my delight of such sort, that I did it not alone? Because none doth ordinarily laugh alone? ordinarily no one; yet laughter sometimes masters men alone and singly when no one whatever is with them, if any thing very ludicrous presents itself



to their senses or mind. Yet I had not done this alone; alone I had never done it. Behold my God, before Thee, the vivid remembrance of my soul; alone, I had never committed that theft, wherein what I stole pleased me not, but that I stole; nor had it alone liked me to do it, nor had I done it. O friendship too unfriendly! thou incomprehensible inveigler of the soul, thou greediness to do mischief out of mirth and wantonness, thou thirst of others' loss, without lust of my own gain or revenge: but when it is said, "Let's go, let's do it," we are ashamed not to be shameless.

Who can disentangle that twisted and intricate knottiness? Foul is it: I hate to think on it, to look on it. But Thee I long for, O Righteousness and Innocency, beautiful and comely to all pure eyes, and of a satisfaction unsating. With Thee is rest entire, and life imperturbable. Whoso enters into Thee, *enters into the joy of his Lord*: and shall not fear, and shall do excellently in the All-Excellent. I sank away from Thee, and I wandered, O my God, too much astray from Thee my stay, in these days of my youth, and I became to myself a barren land.

To Carthage I came, where there sang all around me in my ears a cauldron of unholy loves. I loved not yet, yet I loved to love, and out of a deep-seated want, I hated myself for wanting not. I sought what I might love, in love with loving, and safety I hated, and a way without snares. For within me was a famine of that inward food, Thyself, my God; yet, through that famine I was not hungered; but was without all longing for incorruptible sustenance, not because filled therewith, but the more empty, the more I loathed it. For this cause my soul was sickly and full of sores, it miserably cast itself forth, desiring to be scraped by the touch of objects of sense. Yet if these had not a soul, they would not be objects of love. To love then, and to be loved, was sweet to me; but more when I obtained to enjoy the person I loved. I defiled, therefore, the spring of friendship with the filth of concupiscence, and I beclouded its brightness with the hell of lustfulness; and thus foul and unseemly, I would fain, through exceeding vanity, be



fine and courtly. I fell headlong then into the love, wherein I longed to be ensnared. My God, my Mercy, with how much gall didst thou out of thy great goodness besprinkle for me that sweetness? For I was both beloved, and secretly arrived at the bond of enjoying; and was with joy fettered with sorrow-bringing bonds, that I might be scourged with the iron burning rods of jealousy, and suspicions, and fears, and angers, and quarrels.

Stage-plays also carried me away, full of images of my miseries, and of fuel to my fire. Why is it, that man desires to be made sad, beholding doleful and tragical things, which yet himself would by no means suffer? yet he desires as a spectator to feel sorrow at them, and this very sorrow is his pleasure. What is this but a miserable madness? for a man is the more affected with these actions, the less free he is from such affections. Howsoever, when he suffers in his own person, it uses to be styled misery: when he compassionates others, then it is mercy. But what sort of compassion is this for feigned and scenical passions? for the auditor is not called on to relieve, but only to grieve: and he applauds the actor of these fictions the more, the more he grieves. And if the calamities of those persons (whether of old times, or mere fiction) be so acted, that the spectator is not moved to tears, he goes away disgusted and criticising, but if he be moved to passion, he stays intent, and weeps for joy. . . .

But I, miserable, then loved to grieve, and sought out what to grieve at, when in another's and that feigned and personated misery, that acting best pleased me, and attracted me the most vehemently, which drew tears from me. What marvel that an unhappy sheep, straying from Thy flock, and impatient of Thy keeping, I became infected with a foul disease? And hence the love of griefs; not such as should sink deep into me; for I loved not to suffer, what I loved to look on; but such as upon hearing their fictions should lightly scratch the surface; upon which as on envenomed nails, followed inflamed swelling, impostumes, and a putrified sore. My life being such, was it life, O my God?

And Thy faithful mercy hovered over me afar. Upon how grievous iniquities consumed I myself, pursuing a sacri-

legious curiosity, that having forsaken Thee, it might bring me to the treacherous abyss, and the beguiling service of devils, to whom I sacrificed my evil actions, and in all these things thou didst scourge me! I dared even, while Thy solemnities were celebrated within the walls of Thy Church, to desire, and to compass a business, deserving death for its fruits, for which Thou scourgedst me with grievous punishments, though nothing to my fault, O Thou my exceeding mercy, my God, my refuge from those terrible destroyers, among whom I wandered with a stiff neck, withdrawing further from Thee, loving mine own ways and not Thine; loving a vagrant liberty.

Those studies also, which were accounted commendable, had a view to excelling in the courts of litigation; the more praised, the craftier. Such is men's blindness, glorying even in their blindness. And now I was chief in the rhetoric school, whereat I joyed proudly, and I swelled with arrogancy, though (Lord, Thou knowest) far quieter and altogether removed from the subvertings of those "Subverters"<sup>1</sup> (for this ill-omened and devilish name, was the very badge of gallantry) among whom I lived, with a shameless shame that I was not even as they. With them I lived, and was sometimes delighted with their friendship, whose doings I ever did abhor, *i.e.* their "subvertings," wherewith they wantonly persecuted the modesty of strangers, which they disturbed by a gratuitous jeering, feeding thereon their malicious mirth. Nothing can be liker the very actions of devils than these. What then could they be more truly called than "subverters?" themselves subverted and altogether perverted first, the deceiving spirits secretly deriding and seducing them, wherein themselves delight to jeer at, and deceive others.

Among such as these, in that unsettled age of mine, learned I books of eloquence, wherein I desired to be eminent, out of a damnable and vain glorious end, a joy in human vanity. In the ordinary course of study, I fell upon a certain book of

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<sup>1</sup> "Eversores." This appears to have been a name which a pestilent and savage set of persons gave themselves, licentious alike in speech and action. They seem to have consisted mainly of Carthaginian students, whose savage life is mentioned again, *ib. c. 8.*

Cicero, whose speech almost all admire, not so his heart. This book of his contains an exhortation to philosophy, and is called "*Hortensius*." But this book altered my affections, and turned my prayers to Thyself, O Lord; and made me have other purposes and desires. Every vain hope at once became worthless to me; and I longed with an incredibly burning desire for an immortality of wisdom, and began now to arise, that I might return to Thee. For not to sharpen my tongue, (which thing I seemed to be purchasing with my mother's allowances, in that my nineteenth year, my father being dead two years before,) not to sharpen my tongue did I employ that book; nor did it infuse into me its style, but its matter.

How did I burn then, my God, how did I burn to re-mount from earthly things to Thee, nor knew I what Thou wouldest do with me? For with Thee is wisdom. But the love of wisdom is in Greek called "philosophy," with which that book inflamed me. Some there be that seduce through philosophy, under a great, and smooth, and honourable name colouring and disguising their own errors; and almost all who in that former ages were such, are in that book censured and set forth: there also is made plain that wholesome advice of Thy Spirit, by Thy good and devout servant; *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.* And since at that time (Thou, O light of my heart, knowest) Apostolic Scripture was not known to me, I was delighted with that exhortation, so far only, that I was thereby strongly roused, and kindled, and inflamed to love, and seek, and obtain, and hold, and embrace not this or that sect, but wisdom itself whatever it were; and this alone checked me thus enkindled, that the name of Christ was not in it. For this name, according to Thy mercy, O Lord, this name of my Saviour Thy Son, had my tender heart, even with my mother's milk, devoutly drunk in, and deeply treasured; and whatsoever was without that name, though never so learned, polished, or true, took not entire hold of me.

I resolved then to bend my mind to the holy Scriptures, that I might see what they were. But behold, I see a thing not

understood by the proud, nor laid open to children, lowly in access, in its recesses lofty, and veiled with mysteries; and I was not such as could enter into it, or stoop my neck to follow its steps. For not as I now speak, did I feel when I turned to those Scriptures; but they seemed to me unworthy to be compared to the stateliness of Tully: for my swelling pride shrunk from their lowliness, nor could my sharp wit pierce the interior thereof. Yet were they such as would grow up in a little one. But I disdained to be a little one; and, swoln with pride, took myself to be a great one.

Therefore I fell among men<sup>1</sup> proudly doting, exceeding carnal and prating, in whose mouths were the snares of the Devil, lined with the mixture of the syllables of Thy name, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, our Comforter. These names departed not out of their mouth, but so far forth, as the sound only and the noise of the tongue, for the heart was void of truth. Yet they cried out "Truth, Truth," and spake much thereof to me, yet *it was not in them*: but they spake falsehood, not of Thee only, (who truly art Truth,) but even of those elements of this world, Thy creatures. And I indeed ought to have passed by even philosophers who spake truth concerning them, for love of Thee, my Father, supremely good, Beauty of all things beautiful. O Truth, Truth, how inwardly did even then the marrow of my soul pant after Thee, when they often and diversely, and in many and huge books, echoed of thee to me, though it was but an echo? And these were the dishes wherein to me, hungering after Thee, they, instead of Thee, served up the Sun and Moon, beautiful works of Thine, but yet Thy works, not Thyself, no nor Thy first works. For Thy spiritual works are before these corporeal works, celestial though they be, and shining. But I hungered and thirsted not even after those first works of Thine, but after Thee Thyself, the Truth *in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning*: yet they still set before me in those dishes, glittering fantasies, than which better were it to love this very sun, (which is real to our sight at least,) than those fantasies which by our

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<sup>1</sup> The Manichees, mystical sun-worshippers.



eyes deceive our mind. Yet because I thought them to be Thee, I fed thereon; not eagerly, for Thou didst not in them taste to me as Thou art; for Thou wast not these emptinesses, nor was I nourished by them, but exhausted rather. Food in sleep shews very like our food awake; yet are not those asleep nourished by it, for they are asleep. But those were not even any way like to Thee, as Thou hast now spoken to me; for those were corporeal fantasies, false bodies, than which these true bodies, celestial or terrestrial, which with our fleshly sight we behold, are far more certain: these things the beasts and birds discern as well as we, and they are more certain than when we fancy them. And again, we do with more certainty fancy them, than by them conjecture other vaster and infinite bodies which have no being. Such empty husks was I then fed on; and was not fed. But Thou, my soul's Love, *in looking for whom I fail*, that I may become strong, art neither those bodies which we see, though in heaven; nor those which we see not there; for Thou hast created them, nor dost Thou account them among the chiefest of Thy works. How far then art Thou from those fantasies of mine, fantasies of bodies which altogether are not, than which the images of those bodies, which are, are far more certain, and more certain still the bodies themselves, which yet Thou art not; no, nor yet the soul, which is the life of the bodies. So then, better and more certain is the life of the bodies, than the bodies. But Thou art the life of souls, the life of lives, having life in Thyself; and changest not, life of my soul.

Where then wert Thou then to me, and how far from me? Far verily was I straying from Thee, barred from the very husks of the swine, whom with husks I fed. For how much better are the fables of poets and grammarians, than these snares? For verses, and poems, and "*Medea flying*," are more profitable truly, than these men's five elements, variously disguised, answering to five dens of darkness, which have no being, yet slay the believer. For verses and poems I can turn to true food, and "*Medea flying*," though I did sing, I maintained not; though I heard it sung, I believed not: but those things I did believe. Woe, woe, by what steps was I brought down to *the depths of hell!* toiling and turmoiling through



want of Truth, since I sought after Thee, my God, (to Thee I confess it, who hadst mercy on me, not as yet confessing,) not according to the understanding of the mind, wherein Thou willedst that I should excel the beasts, but according to the sense of the flesh. But Thou wert more inward to me, than my most inward part; and higher than my highest. I lighted upon that bold woman, *simple and knoweth nothing*, shadowed out in Solomon, *sitting at the door, and saying, Eat ye bread of secrecies willingly, and drink ye stolen waters which are sweet*: she seduced me, because she found my soul dwelling abroad in the eye of my flesh, and ruminating on such food, as through it I had devoured.

For other than this, that which really is I knew not; and was, as it were through sharpness of wit, persuaded to assent to foolish deceivers, when they asked me, "whence is evil?" "is God bounded by a bodily shape, and has hairs and nails?" "are they to be esteemed righteous, who had many wives at once, and did kill men, and sacrificed living creatures?" At which I, in my ignorance, was much troubled, and departing from the truth, seemed to myself to be making towards it; because as yet I knew not that evil was nothing but a privation of good, until at last a thing ceases altogether to be; which how should I see, the sight of whose eyes reached only to bodies, and of my mind to a phantasm? And I knew not *God to be a Spirit*, not One who hath parts extended in length and breadth, or whose being was bulk; for every bulk is less in a part, than in the whole: and if it be infinite, it must be less in such part as is defined by a certain space, than in its infinitude; and so is not wholly every where, as Spirit, as God. And what that should be in us, by which we were like to God, and might in Scripture be rightly said to be *after the Image of God*, I was altogether ignorant.

Nor knew I that true inward righteousness, which judgeth not according to custom, but out of the most rightful law of God Almighty, whereby the ways of places and times were disposed, according to those times and places; itself meantime being the same always and everywhere, not one thing in one place, and another in another; according to which Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, and David, were righteous,

and all those commended by the mouth of God; but were judged unrighteous by silly men, *judging out of man's judgment*, and measuring by their own petty habits, the moral habits of the whole human race. As if in an armory, one ignorant what were adapted to each part, should cover his head with greaves, or seek to be shod with a helmet, and complain that they fitted not: or as if on a day, when business is publicly stopped in the afternoon, one were angered at not being allowed to keep open shop, because he had been in the forenoon; or when in one house he observeth some servant take a thing in his hand, which the butler is not suffered to meddle with; or something permitted out of doors, which is forbidden in the dining-room; and should be angry, that in one house, and one family, the same thing is not allotted every where, and to all. Even such are they, who are fretted to hear something to have been lawful for righteous men formerly, which now is not; or that God, for certain temporal respects, commanded them one thing, and these another, obeying both the same righteousness: whereas they see, in one man, and one day, and one house, different things to be fit for different members, and a thing formerly lawful, after a certain time not so; in one corner permitted or commanded, but in another rightly forbidden and punished. Is justice therefore various or mutable? No, but the times, over which it presides, flow not evenly, because they are times. But men, whose *days are few upon the earth*, for that by their senses they cannot harmonize the causes of things in former ages and other nations, which they had no experience of, with these which they have experience of, whereas in one and the same body, day, or family, they easily see what is fitting for each member, and season, part, and person; to the one they take exceptions, to the other they submit.

These things I then knew not, nor observed; they struck my sight on all sides, and I saw them not. I indited verses, in which I might not place every foot every where, but differently in different metres; nor even in any one metre the self-same foot in all places. Yet the art itself, by which I indited had not different principles for these different cases, but comprised all in one. Still I saw not how that righteousness, which good and holy men obeyed, did far more excellently and sub-

limely contain in one all those things which God commanded, and in no part varied; although in varying times it prescribed not every thing at once, but apportioned and enjoined what was fit for each. And I, in my blindness, censured the holy Fathers, not only wherein they made use of things present as God commanded and inspired them, but also wherein they were foretelling things to come, as God was revealing in them.<sup>1</sup> . . .

These things I being ignorant of, scoffed at those Thy holy servants and prophets. And what gained I by scoffing at them, but to be scoffed at by Thee, being insensibly and step by step drawn on to those follies, as to believe that a fig-tree wept when it was plucked, and the tree, its mother, shed milky tears? Which fig notwithstanding (plucked by some other's, not his own guilt) had some (Manichæan) saint eaten and mingled with his bowels, he should breathe out of it angels, yea, there shall burst forth particles of divinity, at every moan or groan in his prayer, which particles of the most high and true god had remained bound in that fig, unless they had been set at liberty by the teeth or belly of some "Elect" saint! And I, miserable, believed that more mercy was to be shewn to the fruits of the earth, than men, for whom they were created. For if any one an hungered, not a Manichæan, should ask for any, that morsel would seem as it were condemned to capital punishment, which should be given him.

'And Thou *sentest Thine hand from above*, and drewest my soul out of that profound darkness, my mother, Thy faithful one, weeping to Thee for me, more than mothers weep the bodily deaths of their children. For she, by that faith and spirit which she had from Thee, discerned the death wherein I lay, and Thou heardest her, O Lord; Thou heardest her, and despisest not her tears, when streaming down, they watered the ground<sup>2</sup> under her eyes in every place where she prayed; yea Thou heardest her. For whence was that dream whereby Thou comfortedst her; so that she allowed me to live with her,

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<sup>1</sup> As in typical actions of the Patriarchs.

<sup>2</sup> He alludes here to that devout manner of the Eastern ancients, who used to lie flat on their faces in prayer.

and to eat at the same table in the house, which she had begun to shrink from, abhorring and detesting the blasphemies of my error? For she saw herself standing on a certain wooden rule, and a shining youth coming towards her, cheerful and smiling upon her, herself grieving, and overwhelmed with grief. But he having (in order to instruct, as is their wont, not to be instructed) enquired of her the causes of her grief and daily tears, and she answering that she was bewailing my perdition, he bade her rest contented, and told her to look and observe, "That where she was, there was I also." And when she looked, she saw me standing by her in the same rule. Whence was this, but that Thine ears were towards her heart? O Thou Good omnipotent, who so carest for every one of us, as if Thou caredst for him only; and so for all, as if they were but one!

Whence was this also, that when she had told me this vision, and I would fain bend it to mean, "That she rather should not despair of being one day what I was;" she presently, without any hesitation, replies; "No; for it was not told me that, 'where he, there thou also;' but 'where thou, there he also?'" I confess to Thee, O Lord, that to the best of my remembrance, (and I have oft spoken of this), that Thy answer, through my waking mother,—that she was not perplexed by the plausibility of my false interpretation, and so quickly saw what was to be seen, and which I certainly had not perceived, before she spake,—even then moved me more than the dream itself, by which a joy to the holy woman, to be fulfilled so long after, was, for the consolation of her present anguish, so long before foresignified. For almost nine years passed, in which I wallowed in the mire of that deep pit, and the darkness of falsehood, often assaying to rise, but dashed down the more grievously. All which time that chaste, godly, and sober widow, (such as Thou lovest,) now more cheered with hope, yet no whit relaxing in her weeping and mourning, ceased not at all hours of her devotions to bewail my case unto Thee. And her *prayers entered into Thy presence*; and yet Thou sufferest me to be yet involved and re-involved in that darkness.

Thou gavest her meantime another answer, which I call  
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to mind; for much I pass by, hasting to those things which more press me to confess unto Thee, and much I do not remember. Thou gavest her then another answer, by a Priest of Thine, a certain Bishop brought up in Thy Church, and well studied in Thy books. Whom when this woman had entreated to vouchsafe to converse with me, refute my errors, unteach me ill things, and teach me good things, (for this he was wont to do, when he found persons fitted to receive it,) he refused, wisely, as I afterwards perceived. For he answered, that I was yet unteachable, being puffed up with the novelty of that heresy, and had already perplexed divers unskilful persons with captious questions, as she had told him: "but let him alone a while," (saith he,) "only pray God for him, he will of himself by reading find what that error is, and how great its impiety." At the same time he told her, how himself, when a little one, had by his seduced mother been consigned over to the Manichees, and not only read, but frequently copied out almost all, their books, and had (without any argument or proof from any one) seen how much that sect was to be avoided; and had avoided it. Which when he had said, and she would not be satisfied, but urged him more, with intreaties and many tears, that he would see me, and discourse with me; he, a little displeased at her importunity, saith, "Go thy ways, and God bless Thee, for it is not possible that the son of these tears should perish." Which answer she took (as she often mentioned in her conversations with me) as if it had sounded from heaven.

For this space of nine years then (from my nineteenth year, to my eight and twentieth) we lived seduced and seducing, deceived and deceiving, in divers lusts; openly, by sciences which they call liberal; secretly, with a false named religion; here proud, there superstitious, every where vain! Here, hunting after the emptiness of popular praise, down even to theatrical applauses, and poetic prizes, and strifes for grassy garlands, and the follies of shows, and the intemperance of desires. There, desiring to be cleansed from these defilements, by carrying food to those who were called "elect" and "holy," out of which, in the workhouse of their stomachs,



they should forge for us Angels and Gods, by whom we might be cleansed. These things did I follow, and practise with my friends, deceived by me, and with me. Let the arrogant mock me, and such as have not been, to their soul's health, stricken and cast down by Thee, O my God; but I would still confess to Thee mine own shame in Thy praise. Suffer me, I beseech Thee, and give me grace to go over in my present remembrance the wanderings of my forepassed time, and *to offer unto Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving*. For what am I to myself without Thee, but a guide to mine own downfall? or what am I even at the best, but an infant sucking the milk Thou givest, and feeding upon Thee, *the food that perisheth not?* But what sort of man is any man, seeing he is but a man? Let now the strong and the mighty laugh at us, but let us *poor and needy* confess unto Thee.

In those years I taught rhetoric, and, overcome by cupidity, made sale of a loquacity to overcome by. Yet I preferred (Lord, Thou knowest) honest scholars, (as they are accounted,) and these I, without artifice, taught artifices, not to be practised against the life of the guiltless, though sometimes for the life of the guilty. And Thou, O God, from afar perceivedst me stumbling in that slippery course, and amid much smoke sending out some sparks of faithfulness, which I shewed in that my guidance of *such as loved vanity*, and *sought after leasing*, myself their companion. In those years I had one,—not in that which is called lawful marriage, but whom I had found out in a wayward passion, void of understanding; yet but one, remaining faithful even to her; in whom I in my own case experienced, what difference there is betwixt the self-restraint of the marriage-covenant, for the sake of issue, and the bargain of a lustful love, where children are born against their parents' will, although, once born, they constrain love.

I remember also, that when I had settled to enter the lists for a theatrical prize, some wizzard asked me what I would give him to win: but I, detesting and abhorring such foul mysteries, answered, "Though the garland were of imperishable gold, I would not suffer a fly to be killed to gain me it." For he was to kill some living creatures in his sacrifices, and

by those honours to invite the devils to favour me. But this ill also I rejected, not out of a pure love for Thee, O God of my heart; for I knew not how to love Thee, who knew not how to conceive aught beyond a material brightness. And doth not a soul, sighing after such fictions, commit fornication against Thee, trust in things unreal, and *feed the wind*? Still I would not forsooth have sacrifices offered to devils for me, to whom I was sacrificing myself by that superstition. For, what else is it *to feed the wind*, but to feed them, that is, by going astray to become their pleasure and derision?

Those impostors then, whom they style Mathematicians, I consulted without scruple; because they seemed to use no sacrifice, nor to pray to any spirit for their divinations; which art, however, Christian and true piety consistently rejects and condemns. For, *it is a good thing to confess unto Thee*, and to say, *Have mercy upon me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee*; and not to abuse Thy mercy for a license to sin, but to remember the Lord's words, *Behold, thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee*. All which wholesome advise they labour to destroy, saying, "The cause of thy sin is inevitably determined in heaven;" and "This did Venus, or Saturn, or Mars:" that man, forsooth, flesh and blood, and proud corruption, might be blameless; while the Creator and Ordainer of heaven and the stars is to bear the blame. And who is He but our God? the very sweetness and well-spring of righteousness, who renderest to every man according to his works: and a broken and contrite heart wilt Thou not despise.

There was in those days a wise man<sup>1</sup> very skilful in physic, and renowned therein, who had with his own proconsular hand put the Agonistic garland upon my distempered head, but not as a physician: for this disease Thou only curest, *who resistest the proud, and givest grace to the humble*. But didst Thou fail me even by that old man, or forbear to heal my soul? For having become more acquainted with him, and hanging assiduously and fixedly on his speech, (for though in simple terms, it was vivid, lively, and earnest,)

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<sup>1</sup> Vindicianus, the great physician of his time.

when he had gathered by my discourse, that I was given to the books of nativity-casters, he kindly and fatherly advised me to cast them away, and not fruitlessly bestow a care and diligence, necessary for useful things, upon these vanities; saying, that he had in his earliest years studied that art, so as to make it the profession whereby he should live, and that, understanding Hippocrates, he could soon have understood such a study as this; and yet he had given it over, and taken to physic, for no other reason, but that he found it utterly false; and he, a grave man, would not get his living by deluding people. "But thou," saith he, "hast rhetoric to maintain thyself by, so that thou followest this of free choice, not of necessity: the more then oughtest Thou to give me credit herein, who laboured to acquire it so perfectly, as to get my living by it alone." Of whom when I had demanded, how then could many true things be foretold by it, he answered me (as he could) "that the force of chance, diffused throughout the whole order of things, brought this about. For if when a man by hap-hazard opens the pages of some poet, who sang and thought of something wholly different, a verse oftentimes fell out, wondrously agreeable to the present business: it were not to be wondered at, if out of the soul of man, unconscious what takes place in it, by some higher instinct an answer should be given, by hap, not by art, corresponding to the business and actions of the demander."

And thus much, either from or through him, Thou conveyedst to me, and tracedst in my memory, what I might hereafter examine for myself. But at that time neither he, nor my dearest Nebridius, a youth singularly good and of a holy fear, who derided the whole body of divination, could persuade me to cast it aside, the authority of the authors swaying me yet more, and as yet I had found no certain proof (such as I sought) whereby it might without all doubt appear, that that which had been truly foretold by those consulted was the result of hap-hazard, and not of the art of the stargazers.

In those years when I first began to teach rhetoric in my native town, I had made one my friend, but too dear to me, from a community of pursuits, of mine own age, and, as my-

self, in the first opening flower of youth. He had grown up of a child with me, and we had been both school-fellows, and play-fellows. But he was not yet my friend as afterwards, nor even then, as true friendship is; for true it cannot be, unless in such as Thou cementest together, cleaving unto Thee, by that *love which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us*. Yet was it but too sweet, ripened by the warmth of kindred studies: for, from the true faith (which he as a youth had not soundly and thoroughly imbibed,) I had warped him also to those superstitious and pernicious fables, for which my mother bewailed me. With me he now erred in mind, nor could my soul be without him. But behold Thou wert close on the steps of Thy fugitives, at once *God of vengeance*, and Fountain of mercies, turning us to Thyself by wonderful means; Thou tookest that man out of this life, when he had scarce filled up one whole year of my friendship, sweet to me above all sweetness of that my life.

*Who can recount all Thy praises*, which he hath felt in his one self? What diddest Thou then, my God, and how unsearchable is the *abyss of Thy judgments*? For long, sore sick of a fever, he lay senseless in a death-sweat; and his recovery being despaired of, he was baptized, unknowing; myself meanwhile little regarding, and presuming that his soul would retain rather what it had received of me, not what was wrought on his unconscious body. But it proved far otherwise: for he was refreshed, and restored. Forthwith, as soon as I could speak with him, (and I could, so soon as he was able, for I never left him, and we hung but too much upon each other,) I essayed to jest<sup>1</sup> with him, as though he would jest with me at that baptism which he had received, when utterly absent in mind and feeling, but had now understood that he had received. But he so shrunk from me, as from an enemy; and with a wonderful and sudden freedom bade me, as I

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<sup>1</sup> The Manichæans, which S. Aug. then was, could not but reject Baptism, or any rite employing a material substance. They purified matter, not matter them. S. Aug. speaks again of his "mocking" at Baptism in his own case.



would continue his friend, forbear such language to him. I, all astonished and amazed, suppressed all my emotions till he should grow well, and his health were strong enough for me to deal with him, as I would. But he was taken away from my phrensy, that with Thee he might be preserved for my comfort; a few days after, in my absence, he was attacked again by the fever, and so departed.

At this grief my heart was utterly darkened; and whatever I beheld was death. My native country was a torment to me, and my father's house a strange unhappiness; and whatever I had shared with him, wanting him, became a distracting torture. Mine eyes sought him every where, but he was not granted them; and I hated all places, for that they had not him; nor could they now tell me, "he is coming," as when he was alive and absent. I became a great riddle to myself, and I asked my soul, *why she was so sad, and why she disquieted me sorely*: but she knew not what to answer me. And if I said, *Trust in God*, she very rightly obeyed me not; because that most dear friend, whom she had lost, was, being man, both truer and better, than that phantasm she was bid to trust in. Only tears were sweet to me, for they succeeded my friend, in the dearest of my affections.

And now, Lord, these things are passed by, and time hath assuaged my wound. May I learn from Thee, who art Truth, and approach the ear of my heart unto Thy mouth, that Thou mayest tell me why weeping is sweet to the miserable? Hast Thou, although present every where, cast away our misery far from Thee? And Thou abidest in Thyself, but we are tossed about in divers trials. And yet unless we mourned in Thine ears, we should have no hope left. Whence then is sweet fruit gathered from the bitterness of life, from groaning, tears, sighs, and complaints? Doth this sweeten it, that we hope Thou hearest? This is true of prayer, for therein is a longing to approach unto Thee. But is it also in grief for a thing lost, and the sorrow wherewith I was then overwhelmed? For I neither hoped he should return to life, nor did I desire this with my tears; but I wept only and grieved. For I was miserable, and had lost my joy. Or is weeping indeed a bitter thing, and for very loathing of the things,



which we before enjoyed, does it then, when we shrink from them, please us?

But what speak I of these things? for now is no time to question, but to confess unto Thee. Wretched I was; and wretched is every soul bound by the friendship of perishable things; he is torn asunder when he loses them, and then he feels the wretchedness, which he had, ere yet he lost them. So was it then with me; I wept most bitterly, and found my repose in bitterness. Thus was I wretched, and that wretched life I held dearer than my friend. For though I would willingly have changed it, yet was I more unwilling to part with it, than with him; yea, I know not whether I would have parted with it even for him, as is related (if not feigned) of Pylades and Orestes, that they would gladly have died for each other or together, not to live together being to them worse than death. But in me there had arisen some unexplained feeling, too contrary to this, for at once I loathed exceedingly to live, and feared to die. I suppose, the more I loved him, the more did I hate, and fear (as a most cruel enemy) death, which had bereaved me of him; and I imagined it would speedily make an end of all men, since it had power over him. Thus was it with me, I remember. Behold my heart, O my God, behold and see into me; for well I remember it, O my Hope, who cleanseest me from the impurity of such affections, directing *mine eyes towards Thee, and plucking my feet out of the snare*. For I wondered at others, subject to death, did live, since he whom I loved, as if he should never die, was dead: and I wondered yet more that myself, who was to him a second self, could live, he being dead. Well said one<sup>1</sup> of his friend, "Thou half of my soul:" for I felt that my soul and his soul were "one soul in two bodies:"<sup>2</sup> and therefore was my life a horror to me, because I would not live halved. And therefore perchance I feared to die, lest he whom I had much loved, should die wholly.

O madness, which knowest not how to love men, like men! O foolish man that I then was, enduring impatiently the lot

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<sup>1</sup> Hor. Carm. L. i. od. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ovid. Trist. l. iv. Eleg. iv. 72.

of man! I fretted then, sighed, wept, was distracted; had neither rest nor counsel. For I bore about a shattered and bleeding soul, impatient of being borne by me, yet where to repose it, I found not. Not in calm groves, not in games and music, nor in fragrant spots, nor in curious banquettings, nor in the pleasures of the bed and the couch; nor (finally) in books or poesy, found it repose. All things looked ghastly, yea, the very light; whatsoever was not what he was, was revolting and hateful, except groaning and tears. For in those alone found I a little refreshment. But when my soul was withdrawn from them, a huge load of misery weighed me down. To Thee, O Lord, it ought to have been raised, for Thee to lighten; I knew it; but neither could nor would; the more, since, when I thought of Thee, Thou wert not to me any solid or substantial thing. For Thou wert not Thyself, but a mere phantom, and my error was my God. If I offered to discharge my load thereon, that it might rest, it glided through the void, and came rushing down again on me; and I had remained to myself a hapless spot, where I could neither be, nor be from thence. For whither should my heart flee from my heart? Whither should I flee from myself? Whither not follow myself? And yet I fled out of my country; for so should mine eyes less look for him, where they were not wont to see him. And thus from Thagaste, I came to Carthage.

Times lose no time; nor do they roll idly by; through our senses they work strange operations on the mind. Behold, they went and came day by day, and by coming and going, introduced into my mind other imaginations, and other remembrances; and little by little patched me up again with my old kind of delights, unto which that my sorrow gave way. And yet there succeeded, not indeed other griefs, yet the causes of other griefs. For whence had that former grief so easily reached my very inmost soul, but that I had poured out my soul upon the dust, in loving one that must die, as if he would never die? For what restored and refeshed me chiefly, was the solaces of other friends, with whom I did love, what instead of Thee I loved: and this was a great fable, and protracted lie, by whose adulterous stimulus, our soul, which lay

itching in our ears, was being defiled. But that fable would not die to me, so oft as any of my friends died. There were other things which in them did more take my mind; to talk and jest together, to do kind offices by turns; to read together honied books; to play the fool or be earnest together; to dissent at times without discontent, as a man might with his own self; and even with the seldomness of these dissentings, to season our more frequent consentings; sometimes to teach, and sometimes learn; long for the absent with impatience; and welcome the coming with joy. These and the like expressions, proceeding out of the hearts of those that loved and were loved again, by the countenance, the tongue, the eyes, and a thousand pleasing gestures, were so much fuel to melt our souls together, and out of many make but one.

This is it that is loved in friends; and so loved, that a man's conscience condemns itself, if he love not him that loves him again, or love not again him that loves him, looking for nothing from his person, but indications of his love. Hence that mourning, if one die, and darkenings of sorrows, that steeping of the heart in tears, all sweetness turned to bitterness; and upon the loss of life of the dying, the death of the living. Blessed whoso loveth Thee, and his friend in Thee, and his enemy for Thee. For he alone loses none dear to him, to whom all are dear in Him Who cannot be lost. And who is this but our God, the *God that made heaven and earth*, and *filleteth them*, because by filling them He created them? Thee none loseth, but who leaveth. And who leaveth Thee whither goeth or whither fleeth he, but from Thee well-pleased, to Thee displeased? For where doth he not find Thy law in his own punishment? *And Thy law is truth*, and truth Thou. . . .

These things I then knew not, and I loved these lower beauties, and I was sinking to the very depths, and to my friends I said, "do we love any thing but the beautiful? What then is the beautiful? and what is beauty? What is it that attracts and wins us to the things we love? for unless there were in them a grace and beauty, they could by no means draw us unto them." And I marked and perceived that in bodies themselves, there was a beauty, from their forming a

sort of whole, and again, another from apt and mutual correspondence, as of a part of the body with its whole, or a shoe with a foot, and the like. And this consideration sprang up in my mind, out of my inmost heart, and I wrote "on the fair and fit," I think, two or three books. Thou knowest, O Lord, for it is gone from me; for I have them not, but they are strayed from me, I know not how.

But what moved me, O Lord my God, to dedicate these books unto Hierius, an orator of Rome, whom I knew not by face, but loved for the fame of his learning which was eminent in him, and some words of his I had heard, which pleased me? But more did he please me, for that he pleased others, who highly extolled him, amazed that out of a Syrian, first instructed in Greek eloquence, should afterwards be formed a wonderful Latin orator, and one most learned in things pertaining unto philosophy. One is commended, and, unseen, he is loved: doth this love enter the heart of the hearer from the mouth of the commander? Not so. But by one who loveth is another kindled. For hence he is loved, who is commended, when the commender is believed to extol him with an unfeigned heart; that is, when one that loves him, praises him.

For so did I then love men, upon the judgment of men, not thine, O my God, in Whom no man is deceived. But yet why not for qualities, like those of a famous charioteer, or fighter with beasts in the theatre, known far and wide by a vulgar popularity, but far otherwise, and earnestly, and so as I would be myself commended? For I would not be commended or loved, as actors are, (though I myself did commend and love them,) but had rather be unknown, than so known; and even hated, than so loved. Where now are the impulses to such various and divers kinds of loves laid up in one soul? Why, since we are equally men, do I love in another what, if I did not hate, I should not spurn and cast from myself? For it holds not, that as a good horse is loved by him, who would not, though he might, be that horse, therefore the same may be said of an actor, who shares our nature. Do I then love in a man, what I hate to be, who am a man? Man himself is a great deep, whose very *hairs Thou number-*



*est*, O Lord, *and they fall not to the ground without Thee*. And yet are the hairs of his head easier to be numbered, than are his feelings, and the beatings of his heart.

But that orator was of that sort whom I loved, as wishing to be myself such; and I erred through a swelling pride, and *was tossed about with every wind*, but yet was steered by Thee, though very secretly. And whence do I know, and whence do I confidently confess unto Thee, that I had loved him more for the love of his commenders, than for the very things for which he was commended? Because, had he been unpraised, and these selfsame men had dispraised him, and with dispraise and contempt told the very same things of him, I had never been so kindled and excited to love him. And yet the things had not been other, nor he himself other; but only the feelings of the relators. See where the impotent soul lies along, that is not yet stayed up by the solidity of truth! Just as the gales of tongues blow from the breast of the opinionative, so it is carried this way and that, driven forward and backward, and the light is overclouded to it, and the truth unseen. And lo, it is before us. And it was to me a great matter, that my discourse and labours should be known to that man: which should he approve, I were the more kindled; but if he disapproved, my empty heart, void of Thy solidity, had been wounded. And yet the “fair and fit,” whereon I wrote to him, I dwelt on with pleasure, and surveyed it, and admired it, though none joined therein.

But I saw not yet, whereon this weighty matter turned in Thy wisdom, O Thou Omnipotent, *who only doest wonders*; and my mind ranged through corporeal forms; and “fair,” I defined and distinguished what is so in itself, and “fit,” whose beauty is in correspondence to some other thing: and this I supported by corporeal examples. And I turned to the nature of the mind, but the false notion which I had of spiritual things, let me not see the truth. Yet the force of truth did of itself flash into mine eyes, and I turned away my panting soul from incorporeal substance to lineaments, and colours, and bulky magnitudes. And not being able to see these in the mind, I thought I could not see my mind. And whereas in



virtue I loved peace, and in viciousness I abhorred discord; in the first I observed an unity, but in the other, a sort of division. And in that unity, I conceived the rational soul, and the nature of truth and of the chief good to consist: but in this division I miserably imagined there to be some unknown substance of, irrational life, and the nature of the chief evil, which should not only be a substance, but real life also, and yet not derived from Thee, O my God, of whom are all things. And yet that first I called a Monad, as it had been a soul without sex; but the latter a Duad;—anger, in deeds of violence, and in flagitiousness, lust; not knowing whereof I spake. For I had not known or learned, that neither was evil a substance, nor our soul that chief and unchangeable good.

For as deeds of violence arise, if that emotion of the soul be corrupted, whence vehement action springs, stirring itself insolently and unrulily; and lusts, when that affection of the soul is ungoverned, whereby carnal pleasures are drunk in, so do errors and false opinions defile the conversation, if the reasonable soul itself be corrupted; as it was then in me, who knew not that it must be enlightened by another light, that it may be partaker of truth, seeing itself is not that nature of truth. *For Thou shalt light my candle, O Lord my God, Thou shalt enlighten my darkness: and of Thy fulness have we all received, for Thou art the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; for in Thee there is no variableness, neither shadow of change.*

But I pressed towards Thee, and was thrust from Thee, that I might taste of death: for *thou resistest the proud*. But what prouder, than for me with a strange madness to maintain myself to be that by nature which Thou art? For whereas I was subject to change, (so much being manifest to me, my very desire to become wise, being the wish, of worse to become better;) yet chose I rather to imagine Thee subject to change, than myself not to be that which Thou art. Therefore I was repelled by Thee, and Thou resistedst my vain stiffneckedness, and I imagined corporeal forms, and—myself flesh, I accused flesh; and, a *wind that passeth away, I*

*returned not to Thee*, but I passed on and on to things which have no being, neither in Thee, nor in me, nor in the body. Neither were they created for me by Thy truth, but by my vanity devised out of things corporeal. And I was wont to ask Thy faithful little ones, my fellow-citizens, (from whom, unknown to myself, I stood exiled,) I was wont, prating and foolishly, to ask them, "Why then doth the soul err which God created?" But I would not be asked, "Why then doth God err?" And I maintained, that Thy unchangeable substance did err upon constraint, rather than confess that my changeable substance had gone astray voluntarily, and now, in punishment, lay in error.

I was then some six or seven and twenty years old when I wrote those volumes; revolving within me corporeal fictions, buzzing in the ears of my heart, which I turned, O sweet truth, to thy inward melody, meditating on the "fair and fit," and longing to stand and hearken to Thee, and *to rejoice greatly at the Bridegroom's voice*, but could not; for by the voices of mine own errors, I was hurried abroad, and through the weight of my own pride, I was sinking into the lowest pit. For Thou didst not *make me to hear joy and gladness*, nor did *the bones exult which were not yet humbled*.

And what did it profit me, that scarce twenty years old a book of Aristotle, which they call the ten Predicaments, falling into my hands, (on whose very name I hung, as on something great and divine, so often as my rhetoric master of Carthage, and others, accounted learned, mouthed it with cheeks bursting with pride,) I read and understood it unaided? And on my conferring with others, who said that they scarcely understood it with very able tutors, not only orally explaining it, but drawing many things in sand, they could tell me no more of it than I had learned, reading it by myself. And the book appeared to me to speak very clearly of substances, such as "man," and of their qualities, as the figure of a man, of what sort it is; and stature, how many feet high; and his relationship, whose brother he is; or where placed; or when born; or whether he stands or sits; or be shod or armed; or does, or suffers any thing; and all the innumerable things which might be ranged under these nine

Predicaments,<sup>1</sup> of which I have given some specimens, or under that chief Predicament of Substance.

What did all this further me, seeing it even hindered me? when, imagining whatever was, was comprehended under those ten Predicaments, I essayed in such wise to understand, O my God, Thy wonderful and unchangeable Unity also, as if Thou also hadst been subjected to Thine own greatness or beauty; so that (as in bodies) they should exist in Thee, as their subject: whereas Thou Thyself art Thy greatness and beauty; but a body is not great or fair in that it is a body, seeing, that though it were less great or fair, it should notwithstanding be a body. But it was falsehood which of Thee I conceived, not truth; fictions of my misery, not the realities of Thy Blessedness. For Thou hadst commanded, and it was done in me, that the *earth should bring forth briars and thorns to me*, and that *in the sweat of my brows I should eat my bread*.

And what did it profit me, that all the books I could procure of the so-called liberal arts, I, the vile slave of vile affections, read by myself, and understood? And I delighted in them, but knew not whence came all, that therein was true or certain. For I had my back to the light, and my face to the things enlightened; whence my face, with which I discerned the things enlightened, itself was not enlightened. Whatever was written, either on rhetoric, or logic, geometry, music, and arithmetic, by myself without much difficulty or any instructor, I understood, Thou knowest, O Lord my God; because both quickness of understanding, and acuteness in discerning, is Thy gift: yet did I not thence sacrifice to Thee. So then it served not to my use, but rather to my perdition, since I went about to get so good a *portion of my substance* into my own keeping; and I *kept not my strength for Thee*, but wandered from Thee *into a far country, to spend it upon harlotries*. For what profited me good abilities, not employed

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<sup>1</sup> All the relations of things were comprised by Aristotle under nine heads; quantity, quality, relation, action, passion, where, when, situation, clothing; and these with that wherein they might be found, or "substance," make up the ten categories or predicaments.

to good uses? For I felt not that those arts were attained with great difficulty, even by the studious and talented, until I attempted to explain them to such; when he most excelled in them, who followed me not altogether slowly.

But what did this further me, imagining that Thou, O Lord God, the Truth, wert a vast and bright body, and I a fragment of that body? Perverseness too great! But such was I. Nor do I blush, O my God, to *confess to Thee Thy mercies towards me*, and to call upon Thee, who blushed not then to profess to men my blasphemies, and to bark against Thee. What profited me then my nimble wit in those sciences and all those most knotty volumes, unravelled by me, without aid from human instruction; seeing I erred so foully, and with such sacrilegious shamefulness, in the doctrine of piety? Or what hindrance was a far slower wit to Thy little ones, since they departed not far from Thee, that in the nest of Thy Church they might securely be fledged, and nourish the wings of charity, by the food of a sound faith. O Lord our God, *under the shadow of Thy wings let us hope*; protect us, and carry us. Thou wilt carry us both when little, and *even to hoar hairs wilt Thou carry us*; for our firmness, when it is Thou, then is it firmness; but when our own, it is infirmity. Our good ever lives with Thee; from which when we turn away, we are turned aside. Let us now, O Lord, return, that we may not be overturned, because with Thee our good lives without any decay, which good art Thou; nor need we fear, lest there be no place whither to return, because we fell from it: for through our absence, our mansion fell not—Thy eternity.

I would lay open before my God that nine and twentieth year of mine age. There had then come to Carthage, a certain Bishop of the Manichees, Faustus<sup>1</sup> by name, a great snare of the Devil, and many were entangled by him through that lure of his smooth language: which though I did com-

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<sup>1</sup> Faustus, of African origin, born at Milevis. He was, as a Manichee, banished to an island by the proconsul, the Christians however interceding for him.



mend, yet could I separate from the truth of the things which I was earnest to learn: nor did I so much regard the service of oratory, as the science which this Faustus, so praised among them, set before me to feed upon. Fame had before bespoken him most knowing in all valuable learning, and exquisitely skilled in the liberal sciences. And since I had read and well remembered much of the philosophers, I compared some things of theirs with those long fables of the Manichees, and found the former the more probable; even although they *could only prevail so far as to make judgment of this lower world, the Lord of it they could by no means find out. For Thou art great, O Lord, and hast respect unto the humble, but the proud Thou beholdest afar off.* Nor dost thou draw near, but to *the contrite in heart*, nor art found by the proud, no, not though by curious skill they could number the stars and the sand, and measure the starry heavens, and track the courses of the planets.

For with their understanding and wit, which Thou bestowedst on them, they search out these things; and much have they found out; and foretold, many years before, eclipses of those luminaries, the sun and moon,—what day and hour, and how many digits,—nor did their calculation fail; and it came to pass as they foretold; and they wrote down the rules they had found out, and these are read at this day, and out of them do others foretell in what year, and month of the year, and what day of the month, and what hour of the day, and what part of its light, moon or sun is to be eclipsed, and so it shall be, as it is foreshewed. At these things men, that know not this art, marvel and are astonished, and they that know it, exult, and are puffed up; and by an ungodly pride departing from Thee, and failing of Thy light, they foresee a failure of the sun's light, which shall be, so long before, but see not their own, which is. For they search not religiously whence they have the wit, wherewith they search out this. And finding that Thou madest them, they give not themselves up to Thee, to preserve what Thou madest, nor sacrifice to Thee, what they have made themselves; nor slay their own soaring imaginations, as *fowls of the air*, nor their own diving curiosities, (wherewith, like the *fishes of the sea*, they wander over



the unknown paths of the abyss,) nor their own luxuriousness, as *beasts of the field*, that *Thou, Lord, a consuming fire*, mayest burn up those dead cares of theirs, and re-create themselves immortally.

But they knew not the way, Thy Word, by Whom Thou madest these things which they number, and themselves who number, and the sense whereby they perceive what they number, and the understanding, out of which they number; or that *of Thy wisdom there is no number*. But the Only Begotten is Himself *made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification*, and was numbered among us, and *paid tribute unto Cæsar*. They knew not this Way whereby to descend to Him from themselves, and by Him ascend unto Him. They know not this way, and deemed themselves exalted amongst the stars and shining: and behold, they *fell upon the earth, and their foolish heart was darkened*. They discourse many things truly concerning the creature; but Truth, Artificer of the creature, they seek not piously, and therefore find Him not; or if they find Him, *knowing Him to be God, they glorify Him not as God, neither are thankful, but become vain in their imaginations, and profess themselves to be wise*, attributing to themselves what is Thine; and thereby with most perverse blindness, study to impute to Thee what is their own, forging lies of Thee who art the Truth, and *changing the glory of the uncorruptible God, into an image made like corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things, changing Thy truth into a lie, and worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator*.

Yet many truths concerning the creature retained I from these men, and saw the reason thereof from calculations, the succession of times, and the visible testimonies of the stars; and compared them with the saying of Manichæus, which in his phrenzy he had written most largely on these subjects; but discovered not any account of the solstices, or equinoxes, or the eclipses of the greater lights, nor whatever of this sort I had learned in the books of secular philosophy. But I was commanded to believe; and yet it corresponded not with what had been established by calculations and my own sight, but was quite contrary.

Doth then, O Lord God of truth, whoso knoweth these things, therefore please Thee? Surely unhappy is he who knoweth all these, and knoweth not Thee: but happy whoso knoweth Thee, though he know not these. And whoso knoweth both Thee and them, is not the happier for them, but for Thee only, if, *knowing Thee*, he *glorifies Thee as God*, and *is thankful*, and *becomes not vain in his imaginations*. For as he is better off, who knows how to possess a tree, and returns thanks to Thee for the use thereof, although he know not how many cubits high it is, or how wide it spreads, than he that can measure it, and count all its boughs, and neither owns it, nor knows or loves its Creator: so a believer, whose all this world of wealth is, and *who having nothing, yet possesseth all things*, by cleaving unto Thee, whom all things serve, though he know not even the circles of the Great Bear, yet is it folly to doubt but he is in a better state than one who can measure the heavens, and number the stars, and poise the elements, yet neglecteth Thee *who hast made all things in number, weight and measure*.

But yet who bade that Manichæus write on these things also, skill in which was no element of piety? For Thou hast said to man, *Behold, piety and wisdom*; of which he might be ignorant, though he had perfect knowledge of these things; but these things, since, knowing not, he most impudently dared to teach, he plainly could have no knowledge of piety. For it is vanity to make profession of these worldly things even when known; but confession to Thee is piety. Wherefore this wanderer to this end spake much of these things, that convicted by those who had truly learned them, it might be manifest what understanding he had in the other abstruser things. For he would not have himself meanly thought of, but went about to persuade me, "That the Holy Ghost, the Comforter and Enricher of Thy faithful ones, was with plenary authority personally within him." When then he was found out to have taught falsely of the heaven and stars, and of the motions of the sun and moon, (although these things pertain not to the doctrine of religion,) yet his sacrilegious presumption would become evident enough, seeing he delivered things which not only he knew not, but which were

falsified, with so mad a vanity of pride, that he sought to ascribe them to himself, as to a divine person.

For when I hear any Christian brother ignorant of these things, and mistaken on them, I can patiently behold such a man holding his opinion; nor do I see that any ignorance as to the position or character of the corporeal creation can injure him, so long as he doth not believe any thing unworthy of Thee, O Lord, the Creator of all. But it doth injure him, if he imagine it to pertain to the form of the doctrine of piety, and will yet affirm that too stiffly whereof he is ignorant. And yet is even such an infirmity, in the infancy of faith, borne by our mother Charity, till the new-born may *grow up unto a perfect man*, so as *not to be carried about with every wind of doctrine*. But in him, who in such wise presumed to be the teacher, source, guide, chief of all whom he could so persuade, that whoso followed him, thought that he followed, not a mere man, but Thy Holy Spirit; who would not judge that so great madness, when once convicted of having taught any thing false, were to be detested and utterly rejected? But I had not as yet clearly ascertained, whether the vicissitudes of longer and shorter days and nights, and of day and night itself, with the eclipses of the greater lights, and whatever else of the kind I had read of in other books, might be explained consistently with his sayings; so that, if they by any means might, it should still remain a question to me, whether it were so or no; but I might, on account of his reputed sanctity, rest my credence upon his authority.

And for almost all those nine years, wherein with unsettled mind I had been their disciple, I had longed but too intensely for the coming of this Faustus. For the rest of the sect, whom by chance I had lighted upon, when unable to solve my objections about these things, still held out to me the coming of this Faustus, by conference with whom, these and greater difficulties, if I had them, were to be most readily and abundantly cleared. When then he came, I found him a man of pleasing discourse, and who could speak fluently and in better terms, yet still but the self-same things which they were wont to say. But what availed the utmost neatness of the cup-bearer to my thirst for a more precious draught?

Mine ears were already cloyed with the like, nor did they seem to me therefore better, because better said; nor therefore true, because eloquent; nor the soul therefore wise, because the face was comely, and the language graceful. But they who held him out to me, were no good judges of things; and therefore to them he appeared understanding and wise, because in words pleasing. I felt however that another sort of people were suspicious even of truth, and refused to assent to it, if delivered in a smooth and copious discourse. But Thou, O my God, hadst already taught me by wonderful and secret ways, and therefore I believe that Thou taughtest me, because it is truth, nor is there besides Thee any teacher of truth, where or whencesoever it may shine upon us. Of Thyself therefore had I now learned, that neither ought any thing to seem to be spoken truly, because eloquently; nor therefore falsely, because the utterance of the lips is inharmonious; nor, again, therefore true, because rudely delivered; nor therefore false, because the language is rich; but that wisdom and folly, are as wholesome and unwholesome food; and adorned or unadorned phrases, as courtly or country vessels; either kind of meats may be served up in either kind of dishes.

That greediness then, wherewith I had of so long time expected that man, was delighted verily with his action and feeling when disputing, and his choice and readiness of words to clothe his ideas. I was then delighted, and, with many others and more than they, did I praise and extol him. It troubled me, however, that in the assembly of his auditors, I was not allowed to put in, and communicate<sup>1</sup> those questions that troubled me, in familiar converse with him. Which when I might, and with my friends began to engage his ears at such times as it was not unbecoming for him to discuss with me, and had brought forward such things as moved me; I found him first utterly ignorant of liberal sciences, save grammar, and that but in an ordinary way. But because he had read some of Tully's Orations, a very few books of

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<sup>1</sup> This was the old fashion of the East; where the scholars had liberty to ask questions of their masters, and to move doubts as the professors were reading, or so soon as the lecture was done.



Seneca, some things of the poets, and such few volumes of his own sect, as were written in Latin and neatly, and was daily practised in speaking, he acquired a certain eloquence, which proved the more pleasing and seductive, because under the guidance of a good wit, and with a kind of natural gracefulness. Is it not thus, as I recall it, O Lord my God, Thou Judge of my conscience? Before Thee is my heart, and my remembrance, Who didst at that time direct me by the hidden mystery of Thy providence, and didst set those shameful errors of mine before my face, that I might see and hate them.

For after it was clear, that he was ignorant of those arts in which I thought he excelled, I began to despair of his opening and solving the difficulties which perplexed me; (of which indeed however ignorant, he might have held the truths of piety, had he not been a Manichee.) For their books are fraught with prolix fables, of the heaven, and stars, sun, and moon, and I now no longer thought him able satisfactorily to decide what I much desired, whether, on comparison of these things with the calculations I had elsewhere read, the account given in the books of Manichæus were preferable, or at least as good. Which when I proposed to be considered and discussed, he, so far modestly, shrunk from the burthen. For he knew that he knew not these things, and was not ashamed to confess it. For he was not one of those talking persons, many of whom I had endured, who undertook to teach me these things, and said nothing. But this man had a heart, though not right towards Thee, yet neither altogether treacherous to himself. For he was not altogether ignorant of his own ignorance, nor would he rashly be entangled in a dispute, whence he could neither retreat, nor extricate himself fairly. Even for this I liked him the better. For fairer is the modesty of a candid mind, than the knowledge of those things which I desired; and such I found him, in all the more difficult and subtle questions.

My zeal for the writings of Manichæus being thus blunted, and despairing yet more of their other teachers, seeing that in divers things which perplexed me, he, so renowned among



them, had so turned out; I began to engage with him in the study of that literature, on which he also was much set, (and which as rhetoric-reader I was at that time teaching young students at Carthage,) and to read with him, either what himself desired to hear, or such as I judged fit for his genius. But all my efforts whereby I had purposed to advance in that sect, upon knowledge of that man, came utterly to an end; not that I detached myself from them altogether, but as one finding nothing better, I had settled to be content meanwhile with what I had in whatever way fallen upon, unless by chance something more eligible should dawn upon me. Thus that Faustus, to so many a snare of death, had now, neither willing nor witting it, begun to loosen that wherein I was taken. For Thy hands, O my God, in the secret purpose of Thy providence, did not forsake my soul; and out of my mother's heart's blood, through her tears night and day poured out, was a sacrifice offered for me unto Thee; and Thou didst deal with me by wondrous ways. Thou didst it, O my God: for *the steps of a man are ordered by the Lord, and He shall dispose his way*. Or how shall we obtain salvation, but from Thy hand, re-making what It made?

Thou didst deal with me, that I should be persuaded to go to Rome, and to teach there rather, what I was teaching at Carthage. And how I was persuaded to this, I will not neglect to confess to Thee: because herein also the deepest recesses of Thy wisdom, and Thy most present mercy to us, must be considered and confessed. I did not wish therefore to go to Rome, because higher gains and higher dignities were warranted me by my friends who persuaded me to this, (though even these things had at that time an influence over my mind,) but my chief and almost only reason was, that I heard that young men studied there more peacefully, and were kept quiet under a restraint of more regular discipline; so that they did not, at their pleasures, petulantly rush into the school of one, whose pupils they were not, nor were even admitted without his permission. Whereas at Carthage, there reigns among the scholars a most disgraceful and unruly licence. They burst in audaciously, and with gestures almost frantic,

disturb all order which any one hath established for the good of his scholars. Divers outrages they commit, with a wonderful stolidity, punishable by law, did not custom uphold them; that custom evincing them to be the more miserable, in that they now do as lawful, what by Thy eternal law shall never be lawful; and they think they do it unpunished, whereas they are punished with the very blindness whereby they do it, and suffer incomparably worse than what they do. The manners then which, when a student, I would not make my own, I was fain, as a teacher, to endure in others: and so I was well pleased to go where, all that knew it, assured me that the like was not done. But Thou, *my refuge and my portion in the land of the living*, that I might change my earthly dwelling for the salvation of my soul, at Carthage didst goad me, that I might thereby be torn from it; and at Rome didst proffer me allurements, whereby I might be drawn thither, by men in love with a dying life, the one doing frantic, the other promising vain, things; and, to correct my steps, didst secretly use their and my own perverseness. For both they who disturbed my quiet, were blinded with a disgraceful phrenzy, and they who invited me elsewhere, savoured of earth. And I, who here detested real misery, was there seeking unreal happiness.

But why I went hence, and went thither, Thou knewest, O God, yet shewedst it neither to me, nor to my mother, who grievously bewailed my journey, and followed me as far as the sea. But I deceived her, holding me by force, that either she might keep me back, or go with me, and I feigned that I had a friend whom I could not leave, till he had a fair wind to sail. And I lied to my mother, and such a mother, and escaped: for this also hast Thou mercifully forgiven me, preserving me, thus full of execrable defilements, from the waters of the sea, for the water<sup>1</sup> of Thy Grace; whereby when I was cleansed, the streams of my mother's eyes should be dried, with which for me she daily watered the ground under her face. And yet refusing to return without me, I scarcely persuaded her to stay that night in a place hard by our ship,

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<sup>1</sup> The waters of Baptism.

where was an Oratory<sup>1</sup> in memory of the blessed Cyprian. That night I privily departed, but she was not behind in weeping and prayer. And what, O Lord, was she with so many tears asking of Thee, but that Thou wouldest not suffer me to sail? But Thou, in the depth of Thy counsels and hearing the main point of her desire, regardest not what she then asked, that Thou mightest make me what she ever asked. The wind blew and swelled our sails, and withdrew the shore from our sight; and she on the morrow was there, frantic with sorrow, and with complaints and groans filled Thine ears, who didst then disregard them; whilst through my desires, Thou wert hurrying me to end all desire, and the earthly part of her affection to me was chastened by the allotted scourge of sorrows. For she loved my being with her, as mothers do, but much more than many; and she knew not how great joy Thou wert about to work for her out of my absence. She knew not; therefore did she weep and wail, and by this agony there appeared in her the inheritance of Eve, with sorrow seeking, what in sorrow she had brought forth. And yet, after accusing my treachery and hardheartedness, she betook herself again to intercede to Thee for me, went to her wonted place, and I to Rome.

And lo, there was I received by the scourge of bodily sickness, and I was going down to hell, carrying all the sins which I had committed, both against Thee, and myself, and others, many and grievous, over and above that bond of original sin, whereby *we all die in Adam*. For Thou hadst not forgiven me any of these things in Christ, nor had He *abolished by His cross the enmity* which by my sins I had incurred with Thee. For how should He, by the crucifixion of a phantasm, which I believed Him to be? So true, then, was the death of my soul, as that of His flesh seemed to me false; and how true the death of His body, so false was the life of my soul,

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<sup>1</sup> Such churches as were built over the grave of any Martyr, or called by his name to preserve the memory of him, had usually the distinguishing title of Martyrium, or Confessio, or Memoria given them. The Latins instead of Martyrium commonly use the name of Memoria Martyrum for such kind of churches.

which did not believe it. And now the fever heightening, I was parting and departing for ever. For had I then parted hence, whither had I departed, but into fire and torments, such as my misdeeds deserved in the truth of Thy appointment? And this she knew not, yet in absence prayed for me. But Thou, every where present, heardest her where she was, and, where I was, hadst compassion upon me; that I should recover the health of my body, though phrenzied as yet in my sacrilegious heart. For I did not in all that danger desire Thy baptism; and I was better as a boy, when I begged it of my mother's piety, as I have before recited and confessed. But I had grown up to my own shame, and I madly scoffed at the prescripts of Thy medicine, who wouldest not suffer me, being such, to die a double death. With which wound had my mother's heart been pierced, it could never be healed. For I cannot express the affection she bare to me, and with how much more vehement anguish she was now in labour of me in the spirit, than she had been at her childbearing in the flesh.

I see not then how she should have been healed, had such a death of mine stricken through the bowels of her love. And where would have been those her so strong and unceasing prayers, unintermitting to Thee alone? But wouldest Thou, God of mercies, *despise* the *contrite and humbled heart* of that chaste and sober widow, so frequent in almsdeeds, so full of duty and service to Thy saints, no day intermitting the oblation at Thine altar, twice a day, morning and evening, without any intermission, coming to Thy church, not for idle tattlings and old wives *fables*; but that she might hear Thee in Thy discourses, and Thou her, in her prayers. Couldst Thou despise and reject from Thy aid the tears of such an one, wherewith she begged of Thee not gold or silver, nor any mutable or passing good, but the salvation of her son's soul? Thou, by whose gift she was such? Never, Lord. Yea, Thou wert at hand, and wert hearing and doing, in that order wherein Thou hadst determined before, that it should be done. Far be it that Thou shouldest deceive her in Thy visions and answers, some whereof I have, some I have not mentioned, which she



laid up in her faithful heart, and ever praying, urged upon Thee, as Thine own handwriting. For Thou, *because Thy mercy endureth for ever*, vouchsafest to those to whom Thou forgivest all their debts, to become also a debtor by Thy promises.

Thou recoveredst me then of that sickness, and healedst the son of Thy handmaid, for the time in body, that he might live, for Thee to bestow upon him a better and more abiding health. And even then, at Rome, I joined myself to those deceiving and deceived "holy ones;" not with their disciples only, (of which number was he, in whose house I had fallen sick and recovered;) but also with those whom they call "The Elect." For I still thought, "that it was not we that sin, but that I know not what other nature sinned in us;" and it delighted my pride, to be free from blame; and when I had done any evil, not to confess I had done any, *that Thou mightest heal my soul because it had sinned against Thee*: but I loved to excuse it, and to accuse I know not what other thing, which was with me, but which I was not. But in truth it was wholly I, and mine impiety had divided me against myself: and that sin was the more incurable, whereby I did not judge myself a sinner; and execrable iniquity it was, that I had rather have Thee, Thee, O God Almighty, to be overcome in me to my destruction, than myself of Thee to salvation. Not as yet then hadst Thou *set a watch before my mouth, and a door of safe keeping around my lips, that my heart might not turn aside to wicked speeches, to make excuses of sins, with men that work iniquity*: and, therefore, was I still *united with their Elect*.

But now despairing to make proficiency in that false doctrine, even those things (with which if I should find no better, I had resolved to rest contented) I now held more laxly and carelessly. For there half arose a thought in me, that those philosophers, whom they call Academics, were wiser than the rest, for that they held, men ought to doubt every thing, and laid down that no truth can be comprehended by man: for so, not then understanding even their meaning, I also was clearly convinced that they thought, as they are com-



monly<sup>1</sup> reported. Yet did I freely and openly discourage that host of mine from that over-confidence which I perceived him to have in those fables, which the books of Manichæus are full of. Yet I lived in more familiar friendship with them, than with others who were not of this heresy. Nor did I maintain it with my ancient eagerness; still my intimacy with that sect (Rome secretly harbouring many of them) made me slower to seek any other way: especially since I despaired of finding the truth, from which they had turned me aside, in Thy Church, O Lord of heaven and earth, Creator of all things visible and invisible: and it seemed to me very unseemly to believe Thee to have the shape of human flesh, and to be bounded by the bodily lineaments of our members. And because, when I wished to think on my God, I knew not what to think of, but a mass of bodies, (for what was not such, did not seem to me to be any thing,) this was the greatest, and almost only cause of my inevitable error.

For hence I believed Evil also to be some such kind of substance, and to have its own foul, and hideous bulk; whether gross, which they called earth, or thin and sublime, (like the body of the air,) which they imagine to be some malignant mind, creeping through that earth. And because a piety, such as it was, constrained me to believe that the good God never created any evil nature, I conceived two masses, contrary to one another, both unbounded, but the evil narrower, the good more expansive. And from this pestilent beginning, the other sacrilegious conceits followed on me. For when my mind endeavoured to recur to the Catholic faith, I was driven back, since that was not the Catholic faith, which I thought to be so. And I seemed to myself more reverential, if I believed of Thee, my God, (to whom Thy mercies confess out of my mouth,) as unbounded, at least on other sides, although on that one where the mass of evil was opposed to Thee, I was constrained to confess Thee bounded; than if on all sides I

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<sup>1</sup> The ordinary opinion as to the Academics, was that they were universal sceptics; S. Aug. states his conviction that they held, concealed, positive truth, but publicly contented themselves with refuting the opposed errors.

should imagine Thee to be bounded by the form of a human body. And it seemed to me better to believe Thee to have created no evil, (which to me ignorant seemed not some only, but a bodily, substance, because I could not conceive of mind, unless as subtile body, and that diffused in definite spaces,) than to believe the nature of evil, such as I conceived it, could come from Thee. Yea, and our Saviour Himself, Thy Only Begotten, I believed to have been reached forth (as it were) for our salvation, out of the mass of Thy most lucid substance, so as to believe nothing of Him, but what I could imagine in my vanity. His Nature then, being such, I thought could not be born of the Virgin Mary, without being mingled with the flesh: and how that which I had so figured to myself, could be mingled, and not defiled, I saw not. I feared therefore to believe Him born in the flesh, lest I should be forced to believe Him defiled by the flesh. Now will Thy spiritual ones mildly and lovingly smile upon me, if they shall read these my confessions. Yet such was I.

Furthermore, what the Manichees had criticised in Thy Scriptures, I thought could not be defended; yet at times verily I had a wish to confer upon these several points with some one very well skilled in those books, and to make trial what he thought thereon: for the words of one Helpidius, as he spoke and disputed face to face against the said Manichees, had begun to stir me even at Carthage: in that he had produced things out of the Scriptures, not easily withstood, the Manichees' answer whereto seemed to me weak. And this answer they liked not to give publicly, but only to us in private. It was, that the Scriptures of the New Testament had been corrupted by I know not whom, who wished to engraft the law of the Jews upon the Christian faith: yet themselves produced not any uncorrupted copies. But I, conceiving of things corporeal only, was mainly held down, vehemently oppressed and in a manner suffocated by those "masses;" panting under which after the breath of Thy truth, I could not breathe it pure and untainted.

I began then diligently to practise that for which I came to Rome, to teach rhetoric; and first, to gather some to my house, to whom, and through whom, I had begun to be

known; when lo, I found other offences committed in Rome, to which I was not exposed in Africa. True, those "subvertings" by profligate young men, were not here practised, as was told me: but on a sudden, said they, to avoid paying their master's stipend, a number of youths plot together, and remove to another;—breakers of faith, who for love of money hold justice cheap. These also *my heart hated*, though not *with a perfect hatred*: for perchance I hated them more because I was to suffer by them, than because they did things utterly unlawful. Of a truth such are base persons, and they go a whoring from Thee, loving these fleeting mockeries of things temporal, and filthy lucre, which fouls the hand that grasps it; hugging the fleeting world, and despising Thee, who abidest, and recallest, and forgivest the adulteress soul of man, when she returns to Thee. And now I hate such depraved and crooked persons, though I love them if corrigible, so as to prefer to money the learning, which they acquire, and to learning, Thee, O God, the truth and fulness of assured good, and most pure peace. But then I rather for my own sake misliked them evil, than liked and wished them good for Thine.

When therefore they of Milan had sent to Rome to the prefect of the city, to furnish them with a rhetoric reader for their city, and send him at the public expense, I made application (through those very persons, intoxicated with Manichæan vanities, to be freed wherefrom I was to go, neither of us however knowing it) that Symmachus, then prefect of the city, would try me by setting me some subject, and so send me. To Milan I came, to Ambrose the Bishop, known to the whole world as among the best of men, Thy devout servant; whose eloquent discourse did then plentifully dispense unto Thy people the flour of Thy wheat, the gladness of Thy oil, and the sober inebriation of Thy wine. To him was I unknowing led by Thee, that by him I might knowingly be led to Thee. That man of God received me as a father, and shewed me an Episcopal kindness on my coming. Thenceforth I began to love him, at first indeed not as a teacher of the truth, (which I utterly despaired of in Thy Church,) but as a person kind towards myself. And I listened diligently

to him preaching to the people, not with that intent I ought, but, as it were, trying his eloquence, whether it answered the fame thereof, or flowed fuller or lower than was reported; and I hung on his words attentively; but of the matter I was as a careless and scornful looker-on; and I was delighted with the sweetness of his discourse, more recondite, yet in manner, less winning and harmonious, than that of Faustus. Of the matter, however, there was no comparison; for the one was wandering amid Manichæan delusions, the other teaching salvation most soundly. But *salvation is far from sinners*, such as I then stood before him; and yet was I drawing nearer by little and little, and unconsciously.

For though I took no pains to learn what he spake, but only to hear how he spake; (for that empty care alone was left me, despairing of a way, open for man, to Thee,) yet together with the words which I would choose, came also into my mind the things which I would refuse; for I could not separate them. And while I opened my heart to admit "how eloquently he spake," there also entered "how truly he spake;" but this by degrees. For first, these things also had now begun to appear to me capable of defence; and the Catholic faith, for which I had thought nothing could be said against the Manichees' objections, I now thought might be maintained without shamelessness; especially after I had heard one or two places of the Old Testament resolved, and oftentimes "*in a figure*," which when I understood literally, I was slain spiritually. Very many places then of those books having been explained, I now blamed my despair, in believing, that no answer could be given to such as hated and scoffed<sup>1</sup> at the Law and the Prophets. Yet did I not therefore then see, that the Catholic way was to be held, because it also could find learned maintainers, who could at large and with some shew of reason answer objections; nor that what I held was therefore to be condemned, because both sides could be maintained. For the Catholic cause seemed to me in such sort not vanquished, as still not as yet to be victorious.

Hereupon I earnestly bent my mind, to see if in any way I

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<sup>1</sup>This was the main weapon of the Manichees.



could by any certain proof convict the Manichees of falsehood. Could I once have conceived a spiritual substance, all their strong holds had been beaten down, and cast utterly out of my mind; but I could not. Notwithstanding, concerning the frame of this world, and the whole of nature, which the senses of the flesh can reach to, as I more and more considered and compared things, I judged the tenets of most of the philosophers to have been much more probable. So then after the manner of the Academics (as they are supposed) doubting of every thing, and wavering between all, I settled so far, that the Manichees were to be abandoned; judging that, even while doubting, I might not continue in that sect, to which I already preferred some of the philosophers; to which philosophers notwithstanding, for that they were without the saving Name of Christ, I utterly refused to commit the cure of my sick soul. I determined therefore so long to be a Catechumen in the Catholic Church, to which I had been commended by my parents, till something certain should dawn upon me, whither I might steer my course.

*O Thou, my hope from my youth*, where wert Thou to me, and whither wert Thou gone? Hadst not Thou created me, and separated me from the beasts of the field, and fowls of the air? Thou hadst made me wiser, yet did I walk in darkness, and in slippery places, and sought Thee abroad out of myself, and found not the God of my heart; and had come into the depths of the sea, and distrusted and despaired of ever finding truth. My mother had now come to me, resolute through piety, following me over sea and land, in all perils confiding in Thee. For in perils of the sea, she comforted the very mariners, (by whom passengers unacquainted with the deep, use rather to be comforted when troubled,) assuring them of a safe arrival, because Thou hadst by a vision assured her thereof. She found me in grievous peril, through despair of ever finding truth. But when I had discovered to her, that I was now no longer a Manichee, though not yet a Catholic Christian, she was not overjoyed, as at something unexpected; although she was now assured concerning that part of my misery, for which she bewailed me as one dead,



though to be reawakened by Thee, carrying me forth upon the bier of her thoughts, that Thou mightest say to the *son of the widow, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise; and he should revive, and begin to speak, and thou shouldst deliver him to his mother.* Her heart then was shaken with no tumultuous exultation, when she heard that what she daily with tears desired of Thee, was already in so great part realized; in that, though I had not yet attained the truth, I was rescued from falsehood; but, as being assured, that Thou, who hadst promised the whole, wouldest one day give the rest, most calmly, and with an heart full of confidence, she replied to me, "She believed in Christ, that before she departed this life, she should see me a Catholic believer." Thus much to me. But to Thee, Fountain of mercies, poured she forth more copious prayers and tears, that Thou wouldest hasten Thy help, and enlighten my darkness; and she hastened the more eagerly to the Church, and hung upon the lips of Ambrose, praying for *the fountain<sup>1</sup> of that water, which springeth up unto life everlasting.* But that man she loved *as an angel of God*, because she knew that by him I had been brought for the present to that doubtful state of faith I now was in, through which she anticipated most confidently, that I should pass from sickness unto health, after the access, as it were, of a sharper fit, which physicians call "the crisis."

When then my mother had once, as she was wont in Afric, brought to the Churches built in memory of the Saints, certain cakes, and bread and wine, and was forbidden by the door-keeper; so soon as she knew that the Bishop had forbidden this, she so piously and obediently embraced his wishes, that I myself wondered how readily she censured her own practice, rather than discuss his prohibition. For wine-bibbing did not lay siege to her spirit, nor did love of wine provoke her to hatred of the truth, as it doth too many, (both men and women,) who revolt at a lesson of sobriety, as men well-drunk at a draught mingled with water. But she, when she had brought her basket with the accustomed festival-

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<sup>1</sup> Baptism. The text is quoted in the prayers for the consecration of the water of Baptism in the old Roman and Gallican Liturgies.

food, to be but tasted by herself, and then given away, never joined therewith more than one small cup of wine, diluted according to her own abstemious habits, which for courtesy she would taste. And if there were many Churches of the departed saints, that were to be honoured in that manner, she still carried round that same one cup, to be used every where; and this, though not only made very watery, but unpleasantly heated with carrying about, she would distribute to those about her by small sips; for she sought their devotion, not pleasure. So soon, then, as she found this custom to be forbidden by that famous preacher, and most pious prelate, even to those that would use it soberly, lest so an occasion of excess might be given to the drunken;<sup>1</sup> and for that these, as it were, anniversary funeral solemnities did much resemble the superstition of the Gentiles, she most willingly forbore it: and for a basket filled with fruits of the earth, she had learned to bring to the Churches of the martyrs, a breast filled with more purified petitions, and to give what she could to the poor; that so the communication<sup>2</sup> of the Lord's Body might be there rightly celebrated, where, after the example of His Passion, the martyrs had been sacrificed and crowned. But yet it seems to me, O Lord my God, and thus thinks my heart of it in Thy sight, that perhaps she would not so readily have yielded to the cutting off of this custom, had it been forbidden by another, whom she loved not as Ambrose, whom, for my salvation, she loved most entirely; and he her again, for her most religious conversation, whereby in good works, so *fervent in spirit*, she was constant at church; so that, when he saw me, he often burst forth into her praises; congratulating me, that I had such a mother; not knowing what a son she had in me, who

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<sup>1</sup> S. Aug. on the same ground, persuaded the Church of Hippo, before he became its Bishop, to abandon this practice, and wrote to urge Aurelius, Bishop of Carthage, to abolish it in his see, anticipating that the rest of Africa would follow the example of the chief see.

<sup>2</sup> The holy Eucharist was always celebrated by the whole Church on the birthday, *i. e.*, day of martyrdom, of the Martyr.

doubted of all these things, and imagined the way to life could not be found out.

Nor did I yet groan in my prayers, that Thou wouldest help me; but my spirit was wholly intent on learning, and restless to dispute. And Ambrose himself, as the world counts happy, I esteemed a happy man, whom personages so great held in such honour; only his celibacy seemed to me a painful course. But what hope he bore within him, what struggles he had against the temptations which beset his very excellencies, or what comfort in adversities, and what sweet joys Thy Bread had for the hidden mouth of his spirit, when chewing the cud thereof, I neither could conjecture, nor had experienced. Nor did he know the tides of my feelings, or the abyss of my danger. For I could not ask of him, what I would as I would, being shut out both from his ear and speech by multitudes of busy people, whose weaknesses he served. With whom when he was not taken up, (which was but a little time,) he was either refreshing his body with the sustenance absolutely necessary, or his mind was reading. But when he was reading, his eye glided over the pages, and his heart searched out the sense, but his voice and tongue were at rest. Oft-times when we had come, (for no man was forbidden to enter, nor was it his wont that any who came should be announced to him,) we saw him thus reading to himself, and never otherwise; and having long sat silent, (for who durst intrude on one so intent?) we were fain to depart, conjecturing, that in the small interval, which he obtained, free from the din of others' business, for the recruiting of his mind, he was loath to be taken off; and perchance he dreaded lest if the author he read should deliver any thing obscurely, some attentive or perplexed hearer should desire him to expound it, or to discuss some of the harder questions; so that his time being thus spent, he could not turn over so many volumes as he desired; although the preserving of his voice (which very little speaking would weaken) might be the truer reason for his reading to himself. But with what intent soever he did it, certainly in such a man it was good.

I however certainly had no opportunity of enquiring what I wished, of that so holy oracle of Thine, his breast, unless

the thing might be answered briefly. But those tides in me, to be poured out to him, required his full leisure, and never found it. I heard him indeed every Lord's day, *rightly expounding the Word of Truth* among the people; and I was more and more convinced, that all the knots of those crafty calumnies, which those our deceivers had knit against the Divine Books, could be unravelled. But when I understood withal, that "*man, created by Thee, after Thine own image,*" was not so understood by Thy spiritual sons, whom of the Catholic Mother Thou hast born again through grace, as though they believed and conceived of Thee as bounded by human shape; (although what a spiritual substance should be I had not even a faint or shadowy notion;) yet, with joy I blushed at having so many years barked not against the Catholic faith, but against the fictions of carnal imaginations. For so rash and impious had I been, that what I ought by enquiring to have learned, I had pronounced on, condemning. For Thou, Most High, and most near; most secret, and most present; Who hast not limbs some larger, some smaller, but art wholly every where, and no where in space, art not of such corporeal shape, yet hast Thou made man after Thine own image; and behold, from head to foot is he contained in space.

Ignorant then how this Thy image should subsist, I should have knocked and proposed the doubt, how it was to be believed, not insultingly opposed it, as if believed. Doubt, then, what to hold for certain, the more sharply gnawed my heart, the more ashamed I was, that so long deluded and deceived by the promise of certainties, I had with childish error and vehemence, prated of so many uncertainties. For that they were falsehoods, became clear to me later. However I was certain that they were uncertain, and that I had formerly accounted them certain, when with a blind contentiousness, I accused Thy Catholic Church, whom I now discovered, not indeed as yet to teach truly, but at least not to teach that, for which I had grievously censured her. So I was confounded, and converted: and I joyed, O my God, that the One Only Church, the body of Thine Only Son, (wherein the name of Christ had been put upon me as an



infant,) had no taste for infantine conceits; nor in her sound doctrine, maintained any tenet which should confine Thee, the Creator of all, in space, however great and large, yet bounded every where by the limits of a human form. . . .

And how Thou didst deliver me out of the bonds of desire, wherewith I was bound most straitly to carnal concupiscence, and out of the drudgery of worldly things, I will now declare, and confess unto Thy name, O Lord, my helper and my redeemer. Amid increasing anxiety, I was doing my wonted business, and daily sighing unto Thee. I attended Thy Church, whenever free from the business under the burden of which I groaned. . . .

Upon a day there came to see me and Alypius,<sup>1</sup> one Pontitianus, our countryman so far as being an African, in high office in the Emperor's court. What he would with us, I know not, but we sat down to converse, and it happened that upon a table for some game, before us, he observed a book, took, opened it, and contrary to his expectation, found it the Apostle Paul; for he had thought it some of those books, which I was wearing myself in teaching. Whereat smiling, and looking at me, he expressed his joy and wonder, that he had on a sudden found this book, and this only before my eyes. For he was a Christian, and baptized, and often bowed himself before Thee our God in the Church, in frequent and continued prayers.

Thence his discourse turned to the flocks in the Monasteries, and their holy ways, a sweet smelling savour unto Thee, and the fruitful deserts of the wilderness, whereof we knew nothing. And there was a Monastery at Milan, full of good brethren, without the city walls, under the fostering care of Ambrose, and we knew it not. He went on with his discourse, and we listened in intent silence. He told us then how one afternoon at Triers, when the Emperor was taken up with the Circensian games, he and three others, his companions, went out to walk in gardens near the city walls, and there as they happened to walk in pairs, one went apart with

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<sup>1</sup> A dear friend of Augustine.



him, and the other two wandered by themselves; and these, in their wanderings, lighted upon a certain cottage, inhabited by certain of thy servants, *poor in spirit, of whom is the kingdom of heaven*, and there they found a little book, containing the life of Antony. This one of them began to read, admire, and kindle at it; and as he read, to meditate on taking up such a life, and giving over his secular service to serve Thee. And these two were of those whom they style agents for the public affairs.<sup>1</sup> Then suddenly, filled with an holy love, and a sober shame, in anger with himself he cast his eyes upon his friend, saying, "Tell me, I pray thee, what would we attain by all these labours of ours? what aim we at? what serve we for? Can our hopes in court rise higher than to be the Emperor's favourites? and in this, what is there not brittle, and full of perils? and by how many perils arrive we at a greater peril? And when arrive we hither? But a friend of God, if I wish it, I become now at once." So spake he. And in pain with the travail of a new life, he turned his eyes again upon the book, and read on, and was changed inwardly, where Thou sawest, and his mind was stripped of the world, as soon appeared. For as he read, and rolled up and down the waves of his heart, he stormed at himself a while, then discerned, and determined on a better course; and now being Thine, said to his friend, "Now have I broken loose from those our hopes, and am resolved to serve God; and this, from this hour, in this place, I begin upon. If thou likest not to imitate me, oppose not." The other answered, he would cleave to him, to partake so glorious a reward, so glorious a service. Thus both being now Thine, were *building the tower at the necessary cost, the forsaking all that they had, and following Thee*. Then Pontitianus and the other with him, that had walked in other parts of the garden, came in search of them to the same place;

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<sup>1</sup> Their employments were, to gather in the Emperor's tributes: to fetch in offenders: to do *Palatina obsequia*, offices of court, provide corn, &c. ride of errands like messengers of the chamber, lie abroad as spies and intelligencers; they were often preferred to places of magistracy in the province: such were called *principes* or *magistriani*. They succeeded the *frumentarii*. Between which two, and the *curiosi*, and the *speculatores*, there was not much difference.

and finding them, reminded them to return, for the day was now far spent. But they relating their resolution and purpose, and how that will was begun, and settled in them, begged them, if they would not join, not to molest them. But the others, though nothing altered from their former selves, did yet bewail themselves, (as he affirmed,) and piously congratulated them, recommending themselves to their prayers; and so, with hearts lingering on the earth, went away to the palace. But the other two, fixing their heart on heaven, remained in the cottage. And both had affianced brides, who when they heard hereof, also dedicated their virginity unto God.

Such was the story of Pontitianus; but Thou, O Lord, while he was speaking, didst turn me round towards myself, taking me from behind my back, where I had placed me, unwilling to observe myself; and setting me before my face, that I might see how foul I was, how crooked and defiled, bespotted and ulcerous. And I beheld and stood aghast; and whither to flee from myself I found not. And if I sought to turn mine eye from off myself, he went on with his relation, and Thou again didst set me over against myself, and thrustedst me before my eyes, that *I might find out mine iniquity, and hate it*. I had known it, but made as though I saw it not, winked at it, and forgot it.

But now, the more ardently I loved those, whose healthful affections I heard of, that they had resigned themselves wholly to Thee to be cured, the more did I abhor myself, when compared with them. For many of my years (some twelve) had now run out with me since my nineteenth, when, upon the reading of Cicero's Hortensius, I was stirred to an earnest love of wisdom; and still I was deferring to reject mere earthly felicity, and give myself to search out that, whereof not the finding only, but the very search, was to be preferred to the treasures and kingdoms of the world, though already found, and to the pleasures of the body, though spread around me at my will. But I wretched, most wretched, in the very commencement of my early youth, had begged chastity of Thee, and said, "Give me chastity and continency, only not yet." For I feared lest Thou shouldest

hear me soon, and soon cure me of the disease of concupiscence, which I wished to have satisfied, rather than extinguished. And I had wandered through crooked ways in a sacrilegious superstition,<sup>1</sup> not indeed assured thereof, but as preferring it to the others which I did not seek religiously, but opposed maliciously.

And I had thought, that I therefore deferred from day to day to reject the hopes of this world, and follow Thee only, because there did not appear aught certain, whither to direct my course. And now was the day come wherein I was to be laid bare to myself, and my conscience was to upbraid me. "Where art thou now, my tongue? Thou saidst, that for an uncertain truth thou likedst not to cast off the baggage of vanity; now, it is certain, and yet that burthen still oppresseth thee, while they who neither have so worn themselves out with seeking it, nor for ten years and more have been thinking thereon, have had their shoulders lightened, and received wings to fly away." Thus was I gnawed within, and exceedingly confounded with an horrible shame, while Pontitianus was so speaking. And he having brought to a close his tale and the business he came for, went his way; and I into myself. What said I not against myself? with what scourges of condemnation lashed I not my soul, that it might follow me, striving to go after Thee! Yet it drew back; refused, but excused not itself. All arguments were spent and confuted; there remained a mute shrinking; and she feared, as she would death, to be restrained from the flux of that custom, whereby she was wasting to death.

Then in this great contention of my inward dwelling, which I had strongly raised against my soul, in *the chamber* of my heart, troubled in mind and countenance, I turned upon Alypius. "What ails us?" I exclaim: "what is it? what heardest thou? The unlearned start up and *take heaven by force*, and we with our learning, and without heart, lo, where we wallow in flesh and blood! Are we ashamed to follow, because others are gone before, and not ashamed not even to follow?" Some such words I uttered, and my fever

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<sup>1</sup> Manicheism.

of mind tore me away from him, while he, gazing on me in astonishment, kept silence. For it was not my wonted tone; and my forehead, cheeks, eyes, colour, tone of voice, spake my mind more than the words I uttered. A little garden there was to our lodging, which we had the use of, as of the whole house; for the master of the house, our host, was not living there. Thither had the tumult of my breast hurried me, where no man might hinder the hot contention wherein I had engaged with myself, until it should end as Thou knewest, I knew not. Only I was healthfully distracted and dying, to live; knowing what evil thing I was, and not knowing what good thing I was shortly to become. I retired then into the garden, and Alypius, on my steps. For his presence did not lessen my privacy; or how could he forsake me so disturbed? We sate down as far removed as might be from the house. I was troubled in spirit, most vehemently indignant that I entered not into Thy will and covenant, O my God, which *all my bones cried out* unto me to enter, and praised it to the skies. And therein we enter not by ships, or chariots, or feet, no, move not so far as I had come from the house to that place where we were sitting. For, not to go only, but to go in thither was nothing else but to will to go, but to will resolutely and thoroughly; not to turn and toss, this way and that, a maimed and half-divided will, struggling, with one part sinking as another rose.

Lastly, in the very fever of my irresoluteness, I made with my body many such motions as men sometimes would, but cannot, if either they have not the limbs, or these be bound with bands, weakened with infirmity, or any other way hindered. Thus, if I tore my hair, beat my forehead, if locking my fingers I clasped my knee; I willed, I did it. But I might have willed, and not done it, if the power of motion in my limbs had not obeyed. So many things then I did, when "to will" was not in itself "to be able;" and I did not what both I longed incomparably more to do, and which soon after, when I should will, I should be able to do; because soon after, when I should will, I should will thoroughly. For in these things the ability was one with the will, and to will was to do; and yet was it not done: and more easily did



my body obey the weakest willing of my soul, in moving its limbs at its nod, than the soul obeyed itself to accomplish in the will alone this its momentous will. . . .

Thus soul-sick was I, and tormented, accusing myself much more severely than my wont, rolling and turning me in my chain, till that were wholly broken, whereby I now was but just, but still was, held. And Thou, O Lord, pressedst upon me in my inward parts by a severe mercy, redoubling the lashes of fear and shame, lest I should again give way, and not bursting that same slight remaining tie, it should recover strength, and bind me the faster. For I said within myself, "Be it done now, be it done now." And as I spake, I all but enacted it. I all but did it, and did it not; yet sunk not back to my former state, but kept my stand hard by, and took breath. And I essayed again, and wanted somewhat less of it, and somewhat less, and all but touched and laid hold of it; and yet came not at it, nor touched, nor laid hold of it: hesitating to die to death and to live to life: and the worse whereto I was inured, prevailed more with me than the better, whereto I was unused: and the very moment wherein I was to become other than I was, the nearer it approached me, the greater horror did it strike with me; yet did it not strike me back, nor turned me away, but held me in suspense.

The very toys of toys, and vanities of vanities, my ancient mistresses, still held me; they plucked my fleshy garment, and whispered softly, "Dost thou cast us off? and from that moment shall we no more be with thee for ever? and from that moment shall not this or that be lawful for thee for ever?" And what was it which they suggested in that I said, "this or that," what did they suggest, O my God? Let Thy mercy turn it away from the soul of Thy servant. What defilements did they suggest! what shame! And now I much less than half heard them, and not openly shewing themselves and contradicting me, but muttering as it were behind my back, and privily plucking me, as I was departing, but to look back on them. Yet they did retard me, so that I hesitated to burst and shake myself free from them, and to spring over whither I was called; a violent habit saying to me, "Thinkest thou, thou canst live without them?"



But now it spake very faintly. For on that side whither I had set my face, and whither I trembled to go, there appeared unto me the chaste dignity of Continency, serene, yet not relaxedly gay, honestly alluring me to come, and doubt not; and stretching forth to receive and embrace me, her holy hands full of multitudes of good examples. There were so many young men and maidens here, a multitude of youth and every age, grave widows and aged virgins; and Continence herself in all, not barren, but a *fruitful mother of children* of joys, by Thee her Husband, O Lord. And she smiled on me with a persuasive mockery, as would she say, "Canst not thou what these youths, what these maidens can? or can they either in themselves, and not rather in the Lord their God? The Lord their God gave me unto them. Why standest thou in thyself, and to standest not? Cast thyself upon Him, fear not He will not withdraw Himself that thou shouldest fall; cast thyself fearlessly upon Him, He will receive, and will heal thee." And I blushed exceedingly, for that I yet heard the mutterings of those toys, and hung in suspense. And she again seemed to say, "Stop thine ears against *those thy unclean members on the earth*, that they may be *mortified*. *They tell thee of delights, but not as doth the law of the Lord thy God.*" This controversy in my heart was self against self only. But Alypius sitting close by my side, in silence waited the issue of my unwonted emotion.

But when a deep consideration had from the secret bottom of my soul drawn together and heaped up all my misery in the sight of my heart; there arose a mighty storm, bringing a mighty shower of tears. Which that I might pour forth wholly, in its natural expressions, I rose from Alypius: solitude was suggested to me as fitter for the business of weeping; so I retired so far that even his presence could not be a burthen to me. Thus was it then with me, and he perceived something of it; for something I suppose I had spoken, wherein the tones of my voice appeared choked with weeping, and so had risen up. He then remained where we were sitting, most extremely astonished. I cast myself down I know not how, under a certain fig-tree, giving full vent to my tears; and the floods of mine eyes gushed out, an *acceptable sacrifice to Thee*. And, not indeed in these words, yet to this purpose,

spake I much unto Thee: *And Thou, O Lord, how long? how long, Lord, wilt Thou be angry, for ever? Remember not our former iniquities*, for I felt that I was held by them. I sent up these sorrowful words; How long? how long, "to-morrow, and to-morrow?" Why not now? why not is there this hour an end to my uncleanness?

So was I speaking, and weeping in the most bitter contrition of my heart, when, lo! I heard from a neighbouring house a voice, as of boy or girl, I know not, chanting, and oft repeating, "Take up and read; Take up and read." Instantly, my countenance altered, I began to think most intently, whether children were wont in any kind of play to sing such words: nor could I remember ever to have heard the like. So checking the torrent of my tears, I arose; interpreting it to be no other than a command from God, to open the book, and read the first chapter I should find. For I had heard of [Saint] Antony, that coming in during the reading of the Gospel, he received the admonition, as if what was being read, was spoken to him; *Go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come follow me*. And by such oracle he was forthwith converted unto Thee. Eagerly then I returned to the place where Alypius was sitting; for there had I laid the volume of the Apostle, when I arose thence. I seized, opened, and in silence read that section, on which my eyes first fell: *Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying: but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh*, in concupiscence. No further would I read; nor needed I: for instantly at the end of this sentence, by a light as it were of serenity infused into my heart, all the darkness of doubt vanished away.

Then putting my finger between, or some other mark, I shut the volume, and with a calmed countenance made it known to Alypius. And was wrought in him, which I knew not, he thus shewed me. He asked to see what I had read: I shewed him; and he looked even further than I had read, and I knew not what followed. This followed, *him that is weak in the faith, receive*; which he applied to himself, and disclosed to me. And by this admonition was he strength-

ened; and by a good resolution and purpose, and most corresponding to his character, wherein he did always very far differ from me, for the better, without any turbulent delay he joined me. Thence we go into my mother; we tell her; she rejoiceth: we relate in order how it took place; she leaps for joy, and triumpheth, and blesseth Thee, *Who art able to do above that which we ask or think*; for she perceiveth that Thou hadst given her more for me, than she was wont to beg by her pitiful and most sorrowful groanings. For Thou convertedst me unto Thyself, so that I sought neither wife, nor any hope of this world, standing in that rule of faith, where Thou hadst shewed me unto her in a vision, so many years before. And Thou didst *convert her mourning into joy*, much more plentiful than she had desired, and in a much more precious and purer way than she erst required, by having grandchildren of my body.









# THE SOVEREIGN SUN

A THEOSOPHICAL TREATISE

BY

JULIAN THE EMPEROR

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*TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL GREEK BY*

C. W. KING, M.A.



# UPON THE SOVEREIGN SUN

ADDRESSED TO SALLUST<sup>1</sup>

It is my opinion that the present subject interests all:

“Whatever breathes, and moves upon the earth,”

all that are endowed with existence, with a rational soul, and with a mind: but that above all others it interests *myself*, inasmuch as I am a votary (*opados*) of the Sun. Of which fact I possess the most certain evidences in my own case; but one instance, which it is allowable to adduce, is the following:—From my earliest infancy I was possessed with a strange longing for the solar rays, so that when, as a boy, I cast my eyes upon the ethereal splendour, my soul felt seized and carried up out of itself. And not merely was it my delight to gaze upon the solar brightness, but at night also whenever I walked out in clear weather, disregarding all else, I used to fix my eyes upon the beauty of the heavens; so that I neither paid attention to what was said to me, nor took any notice of what was going on. On this account, people used to think me too much given to such pursuits, and far too inquisitive for my age: and they even suspected me, long before my beard was grown, of practising divination by means of the heavenly bodies. And yet at that time no book on the subject had fallen into my hands, and I was utterly ignorant of what that science meant. But what use is it to quote these matters, when I have still stranger things to mention; if I should mention what I at that time thought about the gods? But let oblivion rest upon that epoch of darkness! How the radiance of heaven, diffused all around me, used to lift up my soul to its own contemplation! to such a degree that I discovered for myself that

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<sup>1</sup> For an account of Julian the Emperor and Sallust see the introduction to this volume on Roman Philosophy.

the moon's motion was in the opposite direction to that of the rest of the system, long before I met with any works giving the philosophy of such matters. What I have said must be taken as evidence of this. And truly do I envy the felicity of that man who, being endowed with a body sprung from a holy and prophetic seed, is able to unlock the treasures of philosophy: but neither do I undervalue that state and condition to which I have myself attained through the favour of heaven, in that I have drawn my birth from the family to which it has given the empire, and possession of the world.

My own belief is, if philosophers be entitled to any credit, that the Sun is the *common parent* of all men, to use a comprehensive term. It is a true proverb, "Man begets man, and so does the Sun:" but *souls* that luminary showers down upon earth, both out of himself, and out of the other gods: which souls show to what end they were propagated by the kind of life that they pursue. But well is it for that man who, from the third generation backwards, and a long succession of years, has been dedicated to the service of this god; yet neither is that person's condition to be despised who, feeling in his own nature that he is a servant of this deity, alone, or with few on his side, shall have devoted himself to his worship.<sup>1</sup>

Come then, and let us celebrate in the best way we can the anniversary festival,<sup>2</sup> which the imperial city is keeping by sacrifices, with unusual splendour. And yet I feel how difficult it is for the human mind even to form a conception of *that Sun* who is not visible to the sense, if our notion of Him is to be derived from the Sun that is visible; but to *express* the same in language, however inadequately, is, perhaps, beyond the capability of man! To fitly explain *His glory*, I am very well aware, is a thing impossible; in lauding it, however, mediocrity seems the highest point to which human eloquence is able

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<sup>1</sup> Julian's first care had been to erect a temple to the Sun, within the palace precincts, in which he began each day with sacrifice to that luminary.

<sup>2</sup> *Natale Solis Invicti*, "Nativity of the Unconquerable Sun," December 25, the origin of Christmas Day—Julian was writing at Antioch, in the middle of his preparations for the Persian campaign.



to attain. Nevertheless in that attempt may Hermes, presiding over all knowledge, be our guide, together with the Muses and Apollo leader of their quire, for to *him* belongs my theme; and may they grant me to deliver such things concerning the immortal gods as shall be acceptable and well-pleasing to themselves. What plan, therefore, of setting forth His praises shall we pursue? shall we treat of His nature and origin, His powers and influences, both those that be manifest to all, and those occult; or of the distribution of blessings which He showers down so largely upon all worlds; and by so doing, perchance, we shall not be unsuccessful in the kind of praise that is most acceptable unto Him? From this point therefore let us start.

That divine and all-beauteous World, which from the highest vault of Heaven down to the lowest Earth is held together by the immutable providence of God, and which has existed from all eternity, without creation, and shall be *eternal for all time to come*, and which is not regulated by anything, except approximately by the *Fifth Body*<sup>1</sup> (of which the principle is the solar light) placed, as it were, on the second step below the world of *intelligence*; and finally by the means of the "Sovereign of all things, around whom all things stand."<sup>2</sup> This Being, whether properly to be called "That which is above comprehension," or the "Type of things existing," or "The One," (inasmuch as *Unity* appears to be the most ancient of all things), or "The Good," as Plato regularly designates Him, *This*, then, is the Single Principle of all things, and which serves to the universe as a model of indescribable beauty, perfection, unity, and power. And after the pattern of the primary substance that dwells within the Principle, He hath sent forth *out* of Himself, and like in all things *unto* Himself, the Sun, a mighty god, made up of equal parts of intelligible and creative causes. And this is the sense of the

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<sup>1</sup> Apparently the same as the "Soul of the World;" intermediate between the *kosmos noetos*, "world of intelligence," and the Supreme God, "The One."

<sup>2</sup> As Plato calls Him in his celebrated Epistle to Dionysius the Younger.

divine Plato, where he writes, "You may say (replied I) that I mean the offspring of the Good, whom the Good has produced, similar to itself; in order that, what the Good is in the region of intelligence, and as regards things only appreciable by the mind, its offspring should be the same in the region that is visible, and in the things that are appreciable by the sight." For this reason I believe that the *light* of the Sun bears the same relation to things visible as *Truth* does to things intelligible. But this *Whole*,<sup>1</sup> inasmuch as it emanates from the Model and "Idea" of the primal and supreme *Good*, and exists from all eternity around his immutable being, has received sovereignty also over the gods appreciable by the intellect alone, and communicates to them the same good things, (because they belong to the world of intelligence), as are poured down from the Supreme Good upon the other objects of Intelligence. For to these latter, the Supreme Good is the source, as I believe, of beauty, perfection, existence and union; holding them together and illuminating them by its own virtue which is the "Idea" of the Good. The same things, therefore, does the Sun communicate to things intelligible, over whom he was appointed by the Good to reign and to command: although these were created and began to exist at the same moment with himself. And this, I think, was done, in order that a certain Principle which possessed the "Idea" or pattern of the Good, and exercised the principle of Good towards the intelligible gods, should direct all things according to intelligence. And in the third place, this visible disk of the Sun is, in an equal degree, the source of life and preservation to things visible, the objects of sense; and everything which we have said flows down from the Great Deity upon the *intelligible* gods, the same doth this other visible deity communicate to the objects of sense. Of all this there are clear proofs, if you choose to investigate things non-apparent by the means of things that are visible. For example, first take his *light*—is it not an incorporeal and divine image of what is

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<sup>1</sup> Referring to the emanation from the Good, above described by Plato; and apparently what Julian had designated in the beginning as the "Fifth Body."

transparent in its action? and the very quality that we term "transparency," what else is it, to speak generally, but the property that goes with all the elements, and is there approximate form? and which is neither corporeal, nor composite, and does not destroy the natural properties of the body with which it goes. For this reason it is wrong to call *heat* a property of it,<sup>1</sup> or *cold* its opposite; or to *hardness*, *softness*, or any other distinction perceptible by the *touch*, nor, again, must we attribute to it either *scent* or *taste*. For the quality in question is the object of the *sight* alone, which is brought into play by the instrumentality of light. But light is a *form* of this, as it were of a material substance, diffused through bodies. But of that light which is incorporeal, the most perfect part and as it were the *flower*,<sup>2</sup> are the solar rays. The Phœnicians who from their sagacity and learning possess great insight into things divine, hold the doctrine that this universally diffused radiance is a part of the "Soul of the Stars." This opinion is consistent with sound reason: if we consider the light that is without body, we shall perceive that of such light the source cannot be a *body*, but rather the simple *action* of a mind, which spreads itself by means of illumination as far as its proper seat; to which the middle region of the heavens is contiguous, from which place it shines forth with all its vigour and fills the heavenly orbs, illuminating at the same time the whole universe with its divine and pure radiance. The effects that redound from this Power upon the gods themselves, have been already slightly touched upon, and I will shortly return to the subject. When we *see* things, this action has the name of "Sight," but the effect is of no value unless it obtains the influence and assistance of the light. For can anything be the object of sight, unless it be first brought under it, like the raw material to the workman, that it may receive its form? In the same manner, the things that are by their nature objects of the sight, unless they be brought together with light before the instruments of seeing, cease altogether to be objects of sight. Since, therefore, both to the *seers*, in

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<sup>1</sup> The light of the Sun.

<sup>2</sup> Or, as we should say, "quintessence."

order that they may see, and to the objects *seen*, in order that they may be visible, this god gives the powers, it follows that he constitutes by his own action both *sight* and the *objects* of sight. "Perfections" consist of Form and Essence; this definition, however, may be too abstruse. But a fact patent to all, learned equally with unlearned, philosophers and uneducated, is the influence which this deity possesses in the world at his rising and at his setting; how he produces day and night, and how he manifestly transforms and regulates the state of this creation—an influence assignable to no one of the other planets. From these considerations ought we not to draw conclusions respecting matters more beyond the reach of man: that is to say, respecting the existence of those beings that are divine, and objects of the intellect alone, who exist invisible above the heavens, and derive their fulness from that "Type" of Good, Him whom all the host of the stars follow and whose nod that whole family (of deities), whom he governs by his providence, fail not to obey. For the planets round about him (the Sun), as though he were their king, lead on their dance, at appointed distances from him pursue their orbits with the utmost harmony; they make, as it were, pauses; they move backwards and forwards (terms by which those skilled in astronomy denote these properties of the stars); and then, in proportion to her distance from the Sun, how doth the Moon increase or wane!—things patent to all. And such being the case, is it not reasonable to suppose that a more ancient system, corresponding to this visible arrangement of Nature, exists in the case of the deities who are only conceivable by the mind? From all this, therefore, we must gather the powerful and perfecting truth, that the object which enables things to *see* that are endowed with the sense of sight, the same object renders these things perfect by means of his *own* light, whilst the creative and productive power arises from his changes as he moves around the universe: and that capacity for embracing all things at once is the effect of what is so apparent in his movements; namely, the harmony of all in one and the same thing. The *Centre-point* comes from himself<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Is furnished by himself.



as being central; whilst the circumstance of his being placed for king amongst the objects of intellect is the result of his station amongst the planets. If we perceived these, or other similar properties, to exist in any other of the visible deities, certainly we should award *him* the first place amongst them. If, however, he should have nothing in common with them, except this power of doing good, which he communicates unto all, then we ought to acquiesce in the reasoning of the Egyptian priests, who raise altars to the Sun conjointly with Jupiter; nay, rather we should assent to Apollo himself (long before them), who sits on the same throne with Jove, and whose words are,

“One Jove, one Pluto, one Sun is Serapis.”

From which we must conclude that the sovereignty of the Sun and of Jupiter amongst the deities that are objects of intellect is held in common, or rather is one and the same. For this reason Plato seems to me to be right in calling Pluto a *provident* (*phronimos*) deity. The same god we also name “Serapis,” that is *Haïdes*, “Invisible,” clearly because he is the *object of the intellect alone*; up to whom (it is said) that the souls ascend of such as have led the best and most righteous lives. We must not suppose him (Pluto)<sup>1</sup> the terrible being that Fable describes him; but a mild and benevolent one, who completely frees souls from the trammels of Birth; far from nailing them down to new bodies, and punishing and ex-

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<sup>1</sup> Julian seems here to have in his mind Plutarch's observation (in his *Isis and Osiris*) on the true nature of Osiris as identified with Pluto: “It disturbs the mind of the vulgar when they get the notion that the sacred and truly holy Osiris dwells in the earth and under the earth, where are hidden the corpses of such as seem to have come to an end. . . . But the souls of men here below, enveloped in bodies and in passions, have no participation in that deity except in as far as they grasp him by conception, like some indistinct dream, through the medium of philosophy. But when they are set free and migrate to the Formless, Invisible, Impassible, and Good, then doth this god become Leader and King to them; they hang, as it were, upon him, and contemplate without ever being satiated, and long for, that Beauty which can neither be spoken nor described.”



acting retribution from souls already released from the body: but on the contrary, he directs them in their upward course, and carries them aloft to the Intelligible World. This doctrine is far from being of modern origin; those most ancient poets, Homer and Hesiod, are already possessed thereof—whether they conceived it through their own sagacity, or whether, like prophets, they derived the truth from some supernatural source, must be concluded from the fact itself. For the one in describing the genealogy of the Sun makes him out to be the offspring of Hyperion and Thea; by which account he almost directly declares that he is the son of the *supernal* and *all-surpassing* Godhead: for what else can we understand by the title “Hyperion”?<sup>1</sup> And as for “Thea,” what does that imply except the most *divine* of all things? For we must not suppose any corporeal conjunction or marriage in the case—all which are merely the sportive fables of Poetry; but must hold the father and the producer of that Being as something most divine and super-eminent. Of such a nature is He who is above all things, around whom, and by reason of whom, all things do subsist. But Homer calls him by his father’s name, “Hyperion,” in order to show that he is *independent*, and not *subjected* to any *constraint*.<sup>2</sup> For Jupiter, as the poet tells, orders about the other gods according to his will and pleasure, as being their master; but when *this* deity declares that he will retire from Olympus on account of the impious deed of the companions of Ulysses, Jupiter swears:—

“I would drag thee with the sea and earth together.”

Yet he does not threaten him with *chains* or *personal violence*: and promises to avenge him upon the authors of the sacrilege, and begs him to continue to give light to the gods. Now what else did Homer signify by this fable but that this deity, besides being totally independent, possesses also the

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<sup>1</sup> Taken literally for “he that goes over or above.”

<sup>2</sup> Translating *hyperion* in a second sense of “overleaping all bounds.” Of these far-fetched etymologies Julian found examples more than enough in the above-quoted treatise of Plutarch’s.

power of *perfecting*? For wherefore do the other gods stand in need of him, unless that he, by infusing into their substance and essence the illumination of his mystic radiance, he may communicate to them the power of *effecting* all the good things that we have already mentioned?<sup>1</sup>

“Imperial Juno sent the unwearied Sun  
To Ocean his unwilling course to run,”

has no other significance than that, in consequence of darkness being spread over the earth, men supposed it to be night before its time. And of the same goddess we read in another passage of this poet:—

“Darkness profound great Juno sent before.”

But let us now dismiss these poetical fictions; because with what is divine they have mingled much of human alloy; and let us now consider what the deity has declared concerning himself and the other gods.

The region surrounding the Earth has its existence in virtue of *birth*. From whom then does it receive its *eternity* and imperishability, if not from him who holds all things together within defined limits, for it is impossible that the nature of bodies (material) should be without a limit, inasmuch as they cannot dispense with a Final Cause, nor exist through *themselves*. For if things should be created out of what previously existed, whilst nothing is again refunded into that same source—the material for such creation would in time come to an end. But this deity, as he revolves with a defined and regular motion, by kindling this nature, stimulates and renews the same, whilst by his receding to a distance he weakens and destroys it, or else animates its nature by impressing motion upon it, and transfusing life out of himself; whilst when he deserts the same objects, and turns his influence in another direction, he occasions the destruction of the things that are destroyed—the

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<sup>1</sup> The argument only becomes intelligible by keeping in mind that “gods” here signify “Natural Causes,” such as the respective influences of the planets, etc.

good effects that emanate from the same source are equally diffused upon the earth. Different regions become partakers in these benefits in different ways; so that neither their production comes to an end, nor does the Deity confer his blessings upon the recipient world with any degree of variation. For where the *substance* is the same, so is the *action* thereof, in the case of Divine Powers; especially with him who is king of them all, namely, the Sun; of whom the motion is the most simple amongst all the bodies that move in a contrary direction to the world, which fact that most excellent philosopher, Aristotle, adduces to prove the superiority of that luminary to the others.

But, further, the other intelligible Powers exercise a by no means imperceptible influence upon our earth—but what of that, for we do not *exclude* them when we give the *first rank* to the deity in question? In fact, we endeavour to draw conclusions from things evident concerning things that are abstruse and not apparent. For which reason, in the same way as the Sun *perfects* the influence and virtue which descend upon the earth from the other powers, and modifies and applies the same to himself, or rather to the universe, so have we good grounds to infer the existence of a similar arrangement and co-partnership of the same powers in the things that are not apparent to the sense—namely, that the influence of the Sun holds the chief place amongst these also, whilst the rest act in concert with him. But as we have laid it down that he holds the middle place amongst the *intelligible* Powers (which are themselves intermediate), I pray the Sovereign Sun himself to grant me ability to explain the nature of the station that he holds amongst those in whose middle he is placed! By the term “middle” we are to understand not what is so defined in the case of things contrary to each other, as “equi-distant from the extremes,” as *orange* and *dark brown* in the case of colours; *lukewarm*, in that of hot and cold, and other things of the sort; but the power that *collects* and *unites into one* things dispersed, like the “Harmony” of Empedocles, from which he completely excludes all discord and contention. What, then, are the things that the Sun unites into one, and in the midst of which he holds his station, as we have defined

it? The answer is, the *Sensible Powers* that revolve around him as their centre, and the *Immaterial* and *Intelligible Powers* that are with the "Good," whose essence also is intelligible and divine, and multiplied in a manner of their own, without either passion or accession.

In this manner, therefore, the intelligible and excellent substance of the sovereign Sun does not consist of anything made up out of *extremes*, but is perfect in itself, and free from all admixture with other Powers, whether visible or invisible, whether intelligible or sensible. This is my definition of the sense in which "middle station" ought to be understood; but if we are to investigate particularly this central station of his nature, in its relation to *first* and *last*, although the subject be not any easy one to explain, nevertheless let us endeavour to treat it to the best of our ability.

The *one* absolutely, the Intelligible, the ever Pre-existing, comprehending all the universe together within the *One*—nay, more, is not the whole world One living thing—all and everywhere full of life and soul, perfect and made up out of parts likewise perfect? Now of this *double unity* the most perfect part (I mean of the Unity in the *Intelligible* World that comprehends all things in One, and of the Unity encompassing the *Sensible World*, that brings together all things into a single and perfect nature) is the perfection of the sovereign Sun, which is central and single, and placed in the middle of the intermediate Powers. But coming after this, there exists a certain connection in the Intelligible World with the Power that orders and arranges all things in one. Does not the essence of the *Fifth Body*, which is turned, as it were by a lathe, in a circle, move around the heavens, and is that which holds together all the parts, and binds them to one another, uniting what is naturally united<sup>1</sup> amongst them and also those parts that mutually affect each other.<sup>2</sup> These two essences, which are the causes of mutual attraction and of union (whereof the

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<sup>1</sup> The parts having a natural affinity to each other.

<sup>2</sup> A definition showing this "Fifth Body" to be the same with the *Mercury* to whom, says Ammian, Julian paid adoration on his first waking, as the "Soul of the World."



one manifests itself in the Intelligible, the other in the Sensible creation) does the Sun thus concentrate into one. Of the former he imitates this power of embracing and containing all things in the Intelligible creation, inasmuch as he proceeds from that source; whilst he governs the latter, that which is perceptible in the world of Sense. Perhaps, therefore, the self-existent principle, which existed first in the Intelligible creation, and lastly in the Visible bodies of the heavens, is owner of the intermediate, self-created essence of the sovereign Sun, from which primal creative essence there descends upon the visible world the radiance which illuminates the universe.

And again, to consider the subject in another light, *One* indeed is the Creator of all things, but *many* are the creative powers revolving in the heavens; we must, therefore, place the influence of the Sun as *intermediate* with respect to each single operation affecting the earth. Moreover, the principle productive of Life is vastly superabundant in the Intelligible World; our world, also, is evidently full of generative life. It is therefore clear that the life-producing power of the sovereign Sun is intermediate between these two, since the phenomena of Nature bear testimony to the fact; for some kinds of things the Sun brings to perfection, others of them he brings to pass, others he regulates, others he excites, and there exists nothing that, without the creative influence of the Sun, comes to light and is born. And, furthermore, if we consider the Sun's unpolluted, pure, and immaterial essence—where nothing from without approaches, and nothing of a different nature has part; but which is full of its own undefiled purity; and also his nature in the universe, as regards the *Body* that revolves in a circle about the planets which are all free from admixture, must be homogeneous in the extreme and composed of an undefiled and divine body. We shall from all these considerations lay down that the essence of the sovereign Sun, being pure and unmixed, is intermediate between the two—the immaterial Purity in the Intelligible World, and that part existing in the Visible World which is undefiled and without mixture as regards birth and corruption, and of pure homogeneousness. A very weighty argument is this—namely,



that neither does the light which descends from thence, chiefly upon the world, mix itself with anything, nor admit of dirtiness or pollution, but remains entirely, and in all things that are, free from defilement, admixture, and suffering. Besides, we must pay attention to the other kinds of phenomena, both to the Intelligible, and yet more to the Sensible—whatever are connected with matter, or will manifest themselves in relation to our subject. Here, again, the Intelligible is the centre of the species that lie around the mighty Sun, through whose means the species connected with Matter are benefited, inasmuch as they would be unable either to exist, or to subsist, unless they be helped by him as regards their existence. Besides, is not he the author of the separation of Species and of the combination of Matter? He not merely allows himself to be *mentally* conceived, but to be an object of the *sight*, for the distribution of his rays over the whole world, and the unity of his light, demonstrate the creative and separating powers of his mode of action.

And as there are still numerous visible benefits connected with the essence of this deity, which surround that which is intermediate between the Intelligible and the Sensible powers, let us pass on to his final and visible conclusion. The *first degree* of his, contains as it were the model and the substance for a pattern to the Solar Angels who are stationed around the lowest world. After this comes that which is generative of things perceptible to Sense: of which the more refined part contains the source of heaven and the stars, whilst the inferior part superintends generation, containing from all eternity within itself the ungenerated essence of generation. To explain, however, everything relating to the nature of this deity, is beyond the power of man, even though the god himself should grant him the ability to *understand* it: in a case where it seems, to me at least, impossible even *mentally* to conceive all its extent. And now that we have discussed so much, we must put as it were a *seal* upon this subject; and to stay a while and pass on to other points no less requiring examination. What then is this *seal*; and what comprises everything, as it were in a summary of the conception concerning the nature of the god? May He Himself inspire our understanding

when we attempt briefly to explain the *source* out of which he proceeded; and *what* he is himself; and with what *effects* he fills the visible world. It must therefore be laid down that the sovereign Sun *proceeded from the One God*,—One out of the one Intelligible world; he is stationed in the middle of the Intelligible Powers, according to the strictest sense of “middle position;” bringing the last with the first into a union both harmonious and loving, and which fastens together the things that were divided: containing within himself the means of perfecting, of cementing together, of generative life, and of the uniform existence, and to the world of Sense, the author of all kinds of good; not merely adorning and cheering it with the radiance wherewith he himself illumines the same, but also by making subordinate to himself the existence of the Solar Angels; and containing within himself the unbegotten *Cause* of things begotten; and moreover, prior to this, the unfading, unchanging source of things eternal.

All, therefore, that was fitting to be said touching the nature of this deity (although very much has been passed over in silence) has now been stated at some length. But since the multitude of his qualities, and the beauty of his effects have been passed in review, it remains for us to glance at the superabundance of the theories that have been started concerning the nature of this god, because as divine objects, when they come forth into the light, are naturally multiplied, owing to the excess and the fecundity of the life that is in the same. But what, I beseech you, shall we do when we strip ourselves to swim a sea without a shore, having hardly, and much to our content, recovered our breath after the discourse already pronounced? Nevertheless let us trust in the god and take courage, and make an attempt to handle the subject.

As a general rule, all that has been hitherto advanced respecting the nature of this deity, must be understood to refer to his *properties*: for the *nature* of the god is not one thing, and his *influence* another: and truly, besides these two, his *energy* a third thing: seeing that all things which he *wills*, these he *is*, he *can*, and he *works*. For neither doth he *will* that which he *is not*; nor is he without strength to *do* that which he *wills*; nor doth he *will* that which he cannot *effect*. Now

this is very different in the case of men, for theirs is a *double* nature mixed up in one, that of soul and body; the former divine, the latter full of darkness and obscurity: hence naturally arise warfare and discord between the two. For this reason Aristotle remarks that neither our pleasures, nor our pains harmonize with each other within us: for the one part of our nature being in opposition to the other parts, pain is the result. But with the deities there is nothing of the kind, for their essence is that which is good, and that too uninterruptedly, not sometimes one thing, sometimes another. In the first place, therefore, as we stated when attempting to describe his being, it must be borne in mind that we lay this down as regards his *qualities* and his *effects*, since in matters of this kind the discussion has a natural tendency to contradict itself. Everything, therefore, that we are going to consider under the title of *qualities* and *energies*, all these must be regarded as *existence*, and as *effects*. For there are Powers of kindred nature with the Sun, crowning the unpolluted being of that god, multiplying themselves around him in the world, though existing in uniformity. Listen, therefore, to what those say who do not look up to heaven, like so many horses or oxen, or any other irrational or untaught animal, but who investigate the unseen through the medium of the visible Nature. Besides, if agreeable to you, let us consider his supramundane powers and energies, and as they are infinite in number, take a few of them for subjects of discussion. The first of his powers is that by which bringing together into one and the same thing the whole intelligible existence through its whole extent, that is to say, the extremities thereof, he converts it into One: a thing which is clearly discernible in the case of the visible world, how that fire and earth being wrapped together, air and water, which are in the middle, form the bond between the extremes: this fact we may reasonably take as a guide in the case of the nature of bodies that is beyond the reach of Sense. That which possesses the final cause of generations is not *itself* generation; so must we consider it as the law that, in the former case, the extreme causes, entirely separated from bodies,<sup>1</sup> by means of certain intermediate

<sup>1</sup> Purely immaterial.

agencies are by the sovereign Sun brought together, and made one around him: with him, too, concurs the creative power of Jupiter. On this account, as we have already stated, in Cyprus certain temples are founded and dedicated to them both conjointly. Nay, we call Apollo himself to bear witness to this statement (who certainly ought to know more about his own nature than anyone else), for he is co-existent with the Sun, and communicates to him both the unmixed character of things Intelligible, and the stability of his being, and the unchangeableness of his energy. Nay, more, this deity, as is evident, by no means separates from the Sun the discriminating operation of Dionysos; for he ever makes it subordinate to the latter; and, by declaring him (the Sun) "partner of his throne," he becomes to us the interpreter of the most beautiful thoughts by means of that deity. But how many are the final causes of union, the most beautiful, which this deity contains within himself? The Sun, that is, Apollo, is "Leader of the Muses;" and inasmuch as he completes our life with good order, he produces in the world *Æsculapius*; for even before the world was, he had the latter by his side.

But were one to discuss the numerous other qualities belonging to this god, he would never arrive to the end of them. But we must content ourselves with considering his property of *separation* (which also is prior to all bodies and is also prior to all visible energy); whence we must conclude that the sovereign power is one and the same of the Sun and Jupiter; but that the singleness of thoughts, coupled with divinity and unchangeableness, we must adjudge to Apollo: whilst the separative power of creation together with the power that directs this separation, belongs to Dionysos, whilst the quality of the finest harmony and intelligible unification we have already defined as belonging to the power of the "Leader of the Muses;" whilst that which makes complete the harmony of all life, we suppose the prerogative of *Æsculapius*.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Sun and Apollo are one deity in two, but certain powers belong to him when entitled "Dionysos," others when "Musagetes," others again when "Æsculapius." This deity or Natural Power, has the same influence in the universe as the planet Jupiter.



Thus much then for his powers that are prior to the creation of the world, but his operation, which is of the same order with them, over the visible world, consists in the fully carrying out of what is good. For since he is the legitimate offspring of the Good, having received from Him the good portion entire, he distributes it amongst all the Intelligible deities, imparting to them their *good-working* and *perfect* nature. This, then, is one of his *operations*. And the second operation of this god is the most exact distribution of *Intelligible Beauty* amongst the intelligible incorporeal species. For the generative principle which is visible in Nature (that which aims at generating in the Beautiful, and at bringing forth its birth), must necessarily be directed and preceded by that Being who performs the same function in the *Intelligible Beauty*, with full power and without intermission, that is, not to do so at one time, and at another to do the contrary; or now to be generating, and then without generation: inasmuch as all things that here below are *occasionally* beautiful, are so *permanently* in the Intelligible world. We must, therefore, hold that the generative final cause belonging to the Sun in the visible creation is preceded by the uncreated offspring existing in the intelligible and eternal Beauty, which offspring this deity contains, having also stationed it round about himself: to which likewise he imparts his perfect Intelligence, in the same manner as he imparts sight to the eyes by means of his own light: so, in the same way, by means of that *Intelligible pattern* which he holds out (one far more conspicuous, in truth, than his *celestial* radiance) doth he, as I think, furnish all the Intelligible Powers with the capacity to understand and to be understood. Another operation, equally worthy of our admiration, besides those just described, is discoverable with respect to that sovereign of the universe, the Sun—namely, that more benignant Fate which grants birth to angels, to genii, to heroes, and to those souls out of the common run, all which abide by the guidance of their *Pattern* and *Type*, without giving themselves over to the tendency of their bodies.

Now, therefore, the pre-mundane existence, the properties, the operations, in celebrating the sovereign Sun, as far as our ability extended to extol his divinity, all these we have re-



hearsed with the utmost care. But since, as the saying goes, the eyes are more to be trusted than the ears (although they be less to be relied on, and more feeble than the intellect), let us now make an attempt to speak concerning his *visible operation*, after first soliciting from him a moderate degree of success in such attempt.

The visible world has, as I have said, subsisted around him from all eternity: and the Light also which surrounds the world has also its place from all eternity,<sup>1</sup> not intermittently, nor in different degrees at different times, but constantly and in an equable manner. But whosoever will attempt to estimate as far as thought goes, this external Nature, by the measure of Time, he will very easily discover respecting the Sun, Sovereign of all things, of how many blessings he is, from all eternity, the author to the world. I am aware that the great Plato himself, and after him, a man posterior to him in date, though not in mind, I mean Iamblichus of Chalcis (who initiated us into other branches of philosophy, and also into *this* by means of his discourses), did both of them as far as hypothesis goes, take for granted the fact of a Creation and assumed the universe to have been, in a certain sense, the *Work of Time*, in order that the most important of the effects produced by this Power, may be reduced into a shape for examination. But for myself, so far inferior in force to those philosophers, such a liberty must not be taken in any way; since it is certainly unsafe to assume, even as far as bare hypothesis, any *temporal creation* in the case of the world; as also the illustrious hero Iamblichus was of opinion.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, as this deity himself proceeds from an Eternal Cause, or, rather, has produced all things from all eternity, by his divine volition, and with ineffable velocity, and with power not to be surpassed, having begotten all things simultaneously in Time that

<sup>1</sup> Julian insists upon this proposition as being diametrically opposed to the cosmogonies of the Epicureans and the Christians.

<sup>2</sup> Iamblichus, though for the convenience of discussion he assumed a temporal creation, nevertheless thought such assumption a very dangerous one, and not to be attempted by any not passed-masters in philosophy—evidently fearing the advantage such an admission would afford to the Christian side.

now is, he hath allotted to himself the middle space of heaven, as it were, for his more peculiar station, in order that he may equally from all sides distribute his benefits upon the gods that come forth *below* him and *together with* him; that he may direct the Seven,<sup>1</sup> and also the eighth revolution of the heavens. This *ninth operation* I assume to be the *Generation* eternally revolving in an uninterrupted course of production and destruction. As for the planets as they dance around him, it is evident that they have for the law of their movement in relation to this god, some such harmony as that just described to regulate their figures; and the entire heaven, making its parts everywhere harmonize with him, is filled with spirits emanating out of the Sun. For this God is ruler of *five* orbits in the heavens, and whilst traversing three out of these orbits, he produces in three the *Graces*, themselves three in number, the remaining circles form the *Scales* to the Balance of supreme Necessity. I am, perhaps, speaking unintelligibly to the Greeks<sup>2</sup> (just as if it were right only to speak of things commonplace and familiar to them), yet this point is not, as one might suppose, altogether strange to them. For what, I pray you tell me, are your *Dioscouri*, ye very wise people that take most things upon credit, without any examination? Are they not called "alternate day-keepers" because it is not lawful for both of them to be visible on the same day? It is clear that you hear of this both yesterday and to-day.<sup>3</sup> In the next place, in the name of these same Dioscouri, let us mentally assume this very circumstance as applicable to a nature and an operation of a very different kind, in order that what we are speaking about may not be unintelligible: yet, however much we investigate it, we shall not arrive at any exact result. For it is not true, what some suppose to be stated by theologians, that the two hemispheres of the universe possess a kind of *Reason* (*logos*); for in what way each of them is "alternate"<sup>4</sup> it

<sup>1</sup> The seven spheres, moving one within the other, as fully described by Plato, at the end of his "Republick."

<sup>2</sup> These astrological doctrines being of Chaldean growth.

<sup>3</sup> "This is no news to you."

<sup>4</sup> Because they do not change places with each other day by day, but by an imperceptible movement.

is not easy even to conceive, inasmuch as each day the increase in their visible appearance takes place by insensible degrees. Let us now examine the points in which we shall probably be thought by some people to be introducing a novelty. Those beings may properly be designated as "alternate day-keepers"<sup>1</sup> whichsoever possess an equal portion of time out of the Sun's passage over the earth, in one and the same month. Let anyone now see whether this "alternate day-keeping" does not apply to the other cycles, as well as to the tropical. Someone will reply that the case is not the same, because the former are always visible; and for those inhabiting opposite sides of the globe, the one tropical cycle is visible to the one half, the second to the other; whereas in the case of the latter (cycles) those who behold the one, do not behold the other by any manner of means. But not to waste time by dwelling too long upon the same subject; the Sun, by performing his returns (solstices) in the manner known to all, becomes the parent of the *Seasons*: but did he never desert the poles at all, he would be the "Oceanos," that Ruler of the double substance. Perhaps what we are saying is somewhat unintelligible? Homer has said the same thing before us:—

"Ocean, to all things made the source of life."

What, both of mortal, and (as he would say) "of the blessed gods"? Yea, verily, for of all things nothing exists that is not by its substance the offspring of ocean.<sup>2</sup> But why will you have me tell this to the vulgar? Although better to have been shrouded in silence, it nevertheless has been spoken; at all events I declare it, although all men will not readily receive the same.

The solar disk moves over the space which has no stars, and is much more elevated than the fixed region; in this way he will not occupy the centre of the planets, but rather of the

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<sup>1</sup> *Hctērēmeroi*—the ancient title of the Dioscuri.

<sup>2</sup> In other words the philosophical dogma that *Water* is the source of all things. Julian seems to allude to the Egyptian notion (often cited by Plutarch) that the Sun was born of water.

"Three Motions," as they are called in the hypotheses taught in the Mysteries, if, indeed, such things are rightly to be termed "hypotheses," or rather ought they not to be called "articles of faith" (*dogmata*), but what relates to the spheres "hypotheses"? For those so assert who have heard the same from the gods, or else from some mighty dæmons; whereas the others [natural philosophers] make up a theory that is plausible from its agreement with visible phenomena. The latter, indeed, it is but fair to *praise*; but whoso thinks it better to *believe* in the former [the teaching of the Mysteries] him do I both in jest and in earnest admire, and always have admired. Such therefore are their statements upon these points. Besides those I have mentioned, there exist a vast number of Powers in the confines of the heavens; they have been discovered by those persons who do not contemplate the heavens carelessly and after the manner of brute beasts; for the Sun cutting the three circles in four places, by reason of the communication with each of them of the zodiacal circle, again distributes this zodiac amongst the powers of twelve deities, and this again is subdivided into three, so as to make six-and-thirty. Hence, I think, there extends as far as ourselves downwards from heaven above, a triple descent of the Graces; that is to say, from the circles which this god intersects in his course in four places, and so sends down the four-fold splendour of the Seasons, which in truth occupy the turning-points of the times. In fact, the Graces in their representations upon earth imitate the figure of a *circle*,<sup>1</sup> whilst the "Giver of the Graces" (*charidotēs*) is Dionysos, who has been shown to reign conjointly with the Sun in the same place. Wherefore should I mention to you *Horus*, and the other names of gods, all of them belonging in reality to the Sun? For we men have gained our notion of the god from the works

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<sup>1</sup> The Graces, clasping each other round the neck, stand in the form of a circle. Julian, after the fashion of theologians, taking words in the sense they will *bear*, not in that for which they are *meant*, makes Bacchus' old title, "joy-giver," as god of wine, take the transcendental meaning of "Giver of the Graces," supposing the god the Solar Power.



which the same god actually works—he that hath made the universal heaven perfect through his *Intelligible* blessings, and given to the same a share of his *Intelligible* beauty. And beginning from that point, himself wholly and partially by the giving of good men,<sup>1</sup> . . . for they superintend every motion as far as the extremest limits of the universe. And Nature and Soul, and all that at any time exists, all these, and in all places, does he bring to perfection; and after having marshalled so vast a host of deities into one governing unity, he has given to them *Athene*, or *Providence*; who, mythology says, sprung forth out of the head of Jupiter; but whom *we* assert to have been projected entire out of the entire Sovereign Sun, for she was contained within him, in this particular dissenting from the legend, in that we do not hold her to have sprung out of the *topmost* part, but all *entire*, and out of the *entire* god. For in other respects, inasmuch as we consider Jupiter to be one and the same with the Sun, we are agreed with the antique tradition. And in calling Athene “Providence,” we are making no innovation, if indeed we rightly understand the line:—

“He came to Pytho and the blue-eyed *Prescience*.”

In this way, then, was Athene, or Providence, regarded by the ancients also, as partner of the throne with Apollo, the latter considered as no other than the Sun. Perhaps Homer uttered this by divine command, for he was, as is commonly said, “possessed by a god,” and he has actually spoken like a prophet in many places in his poem:—

“Honours, that Phœbus and Athene gain.”

From Jupiter, that is to say, who is the same with the Sun, in the same way as the sovereign Apollo is a partner with the Sun by means of the *singleness* of their conceptions. So, in—

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<sup>1</sup> A *lacuna* here in the MS., but what follows shows it to have referred to the Sun’s giving birth to angels, heroes, etc., as set forth amongst his other “Operations.”



deed, must we believe that Athene, having received her own being from him (and who is also his perfect *Intelligence*), binds together the other deities, with the Sun into unity, without confusion of person with the Sun, sovereign of the universe; and that she regulates and distributes the streams of unpolluted and pure Life from the topmost vault<sup>1</sup> of heaven, through the seven cycles, as far as the region of the Moon, which last, as being the most remote of the bodies moving in cycles, this goddess<sup>2</sup> has filled by the agency of her thought; empowered by which the Moon not merely contemplates the Intelligible things that be *above* the heavens, but regulates the Matter that is below her, and eliminates therefrom whatever is brutish, turbulent, and disorderly. Unto men Athene gives good things—namely, wisdom, understanding, and the creative arts; and she dwells in their citadels, I suppose, as being the founder of civil government through the communication of her own wisdom.

Now for a few words about Aphrodite, whom the Phœnician theologians agree in making co-operate in the work of creation with the last-mentioned goddess—and I believe they are right. She, then, is the *mingling together* of the celestial deities, and of the harmony of the same, for the purposes of love and unification. For she being near to the Sun, and running her course together with him, and approaching close to him, she fills the heavens with a good temperament, she imparts to the earth the generative power, whilst she herself provides for the perpetuity of generation of animals, of which generation the Sovereign Sun contains the final efficient cause. She, however, is joint cause with him, enthralling our souls by the aid of pleasure, whilst she sheds down from the æther upon the earth her rays so delightful and pure, more lustrous than gold itself.

<sup>1</sup> The Egyptian Neith is regularly depicted as forming, by her own body, bent from one end of the horizon to the other, the actual vault of heaven. In the primitive Nature-worship she represented the visible heavens. The Alexandrian Platonists extracted from the type the refined doctrine set forth in the text.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps referring to Aristotle's statement that Athene was properly the lunar deity, whence her attribute, the Owl.

And yet, again, I wish to mete out a little more of the theology of the Phœnicians—whether to good purpose my argument will discover as it goes on. Those who inhabit Edessa, a place consecrated to the Sun, from time immemorial, place on the same throne with him two gods called “Monimos” and “Azizos.” By these names are understood (as Iamblichus says, from whom I have borrowed these few things out of his abundance) by “Monimos” *Mercury*, by “Azizos” *Mars*, the assessor of the Sun, who also diffuses, as a channel, many blessings upon the region encompassing the earth.

The operations therefore of this deity as regards the heavens are of the number above stated, and are effected by the aforesaid agencies, reaching as far as the extremest boundaries of the earth. But all that he operates in the region *above the Moon* it would be too tedious to recount in full. Nevertheless, these also must be told in a summary way: I am aware that I have already alluded to them when I recommended you to view things unseen through the medium of natural phenomena, in the question of the nature of the gods. My subject now demands that in this sequence I should express my opinions upon these points.

In the same manner therefore as we have laid it down that the Sun holds the supremacy in the Intelligible world, having round about his own being, in one species, a vast multitude of gods (supposing him to have the same in the Sensible world), all of which move along their everlasting and most felicitous course in a circle, so do we prove him to be *Leader* and *Lord*, imparting to and filling the whole heaven, as he does, with his own splendour, likewise with infinite other blessings that be invisible to us; whilst the benefits commenced by the other deities are brought to perfection by him; nay, more, before this, these gods themselves were rendered perfect through his spontaneous and divine operation. And similarly it is to be believed that certain deities, held together by the Sovereign Sun, are stationed about the region belonging to *Birth*,<sup>1</sup> who

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<sup>1</sup> Meaning, perhaps, the Milky Way, which Macrobius describes as the road taken by souls in their downward course for union with the body.

govern the fourfold nature of the elements, and dwell, in company with the three superior species, round about the souls around which these same elements are fixed. And to the disembodied souls themselves of how many blessings is not He the source! by his holding forth to them the means of examining themselves, by his correcting them with his justice, and purifying them with his brilliancy. Is it not He that stirs up and fans the flame of all Nature, by imparting unto her the faculty of generation? Nay more, to the disembodied natures also He is truly the cause of their progress towards perfection, for Man is generalled by Man and the Sun, as Aristotle hath it. The same opinion it behoves us to hold respecting the Sovereign Sun, in the case of all other things, whatever be the operations. And what! doth not this deity produce the rain, the winds, and all that takes place in the upper regions, by making use of the double effect of *evaporation*, as it were for his raw material? For by his heating the earth he draws up the vapour and fumes; out of which are generated not only atmospheric changes, but all the effects, both small and great, that go on under the earth.

But why do I dwell upon the same things when it is in my power to advance towards the end, after having sung all the benefits that the Sun hath bestowed upon mankind? For we spring out of him, and are nourished from him. Furthermore, his more transcendental operations—all the service he renders unto souls, by releasing them from the body, and carrying them up to the Beings that are cognate to the Divinity, whilst he lends them for vehicle of their safe return to their birthplace, the subtile and elastic part of the divine light—all this may be celebrated by others as it deserves: but by *us* it must rather be believed in than demonstrated. Such things, however, as by their nature are patent to all people, these we must not be too lazy to set forth. Heaven, says Plato, was our first teacher of Philosophy; for from thence we got the notion of the nature of *Numbers*. The same Plato adds Day and Night, in the first place to the list of teachers; and secondly we gain the same notions from the light of the Moon, the which is lent to this deity from the Sun. After this we advance still further in this power of comprehension, every-

where having for our aim an exact agreement with the teaching of this deity. As the same philosopher somewhere observes "that our race being full of trouble, the gods out of compassion have given to us Bacchus and the Muses for allies."<sup>1</sup> Now it has been proved by us already that the Sun is the common leader of these deities, since he is sung of as the sire of Bacchus; and likewise is the "Leader of the Muses." And the Apollo who is joint-ruler with him, hath he not given forth his Oracles in all parts of the earth? He has given to men inspired wisdom; he has adorned states with religious and political institutions.

This god has civilized, by the agency of the Greek colonies, the greatest part of the habitable globe; he has prepared it the more readily to submit to the Romans—a race possessing not merely a Grecian origin, but also *Greek*, and who have established and maintained a creed as regards the gods that is thoroughly Greek from beginning to end; and who, besides all this, have founded a form of government in no way inferior to that of the best regulated states—even if of all the governments that have ever been tried, it be not the very best; from all which circumstances, I think I have myself recognized the Roman state as being *Greek* both in its origin and in its government. Furthermore, I make known unto thee how He hath provided for the bodily health of us all, by having produced *Æsculapius*, the Preserver of the universe; and how he hath communicated to us virtue of every kind, by sending down Aphrodite in company with Athene for our guardian; having made it all but a law that no one should use copulation except for the end of generating his like. For this reason truly, according to his revolutions and seasons, do the various vegetable and animal races feel themselves stirred towards the generation of their kind. What need is there to magnify the glory of his rays, and of his light? A night without moon, and without stars, how terrible is it! Let anyone reflect on this, in order that he may estimate how great a blessing is

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<sup>1</sup> Julian, like the philosophers of his day, here "sees in *Plato* more than *Plato* saw," for the ancient sage is unmistakably thinking of wine and song in their most materialistic sense.



the light we derive from the Sun! Although he affords the same light continuously, and not shared with Night, in the suitable regions reckoning upwards from the Moon, yet doth he grant men a respite from their toil through the intervention of the night. But there would be no end to the discourse were one to attempt to enumerate everything of this sort, inasmuch as there is no blessing in life that we have not received from this deity—either complete, and directly from him, or else indirectly coming from him, but perfected by the means of the other Powers. Our patron is he—for the Capitol in our metropolis is occupied not merely by Jupiter, conjointly with Venus and Minerva—that Jupiter, who is hymned as the “Universal Sire”—but by Apollo likewise upon the Palatine Hill, Apollo himself—a name thus common to all, and belonging by right to them. But how we universally and everywhere belong to him, as the sons of Romulus and of Æneas, though I have much to say, I will but mention a few, and the best-known facts. Æneas sprung from Venus, who is the agent of and akin to, the Sun. The actual founder of our city, tradition has delivered down to be the son of Mars, confirming the improbable tale by the miracle that followed his birth; for a she-wolf gave suck to the child, according to report. That Mars, called “Azizos” by the natives of Edessa in Syria, is the harbinger of the Sun, though I am aware of the fact and have already named, I shall for the present pass it by. For what reason is the wolf the attribute of Mars, rather than of the Sun? And yet they say that his annual revolution is called “Lycobas,” *Wolf’s-walk*, after this god; and not only Homer so denominates it, but also other well-known poets; as, moreover, the god himself, for he says at the end of a response

“The twelvemonth’s ancient *Lycobas*, in dance.”

Do you wish me then to adduce to you a stronger proof that the founder of our city was not merely *sent down* from (the planet) Mars, but that perhaps to the *creation of his body* aid was lent by some martial and generous dæmon—the one that, according to the legend, visited Sylvia as she was carry-



ing the lustral water to her goddess. And to make a general observation, the soul of the god Quirinus came down from the Sun. For in the same manner as the exact conjunction of those bodies which assign sovereignty, namely, the Sun and Moon, brought him down upon earth, so did it carry up again to heaven that soul which it carried back again from earth; when it eliminated the mortal part of his body by the fire of lightning. And thus manifestly, the goddess who is the creator of terrestrial phenomena, and who is in a special sense subordinate to the Sun, took back again that Quirinus who was sent down upon earth through the agency of Minerva—Providence; for she carried him back, as he flew upwards from earth, unto the Sun, sovereign of the Universe. Do you wish me to adduce respecting the same matter the institution of King Numa? The fire derived from the Sun is preserved unextinguished by virgins, agreeing with the different Seasons in number; which latter in truth guard the fire that was produced by the Moon, around the earth, by the influence of the Sun. I have yet a stronger proof to mention of this deity's existence; the actual working of the most divine sovereign. The months, by all mankind so to speak, are reckoned from the Moon; we alone, and the Egyptians, count the days of the year according to the motions of the Sun. If after this I were to mention that we worship *Mithras*, and celebrate quadrennial games, I should be speaking of more recent institutions; it is better therefore to confine myself to those of more ancient date in what I am going to add. The beginning of the annual cycle different nations calculate in different ways; some taking for it the vernal equinox; others the middle point of Summer; others again the end of Autumn. In all this they celebrate the most conspicuous blessings of the deity: in the first, the opening of the favourable season for work, when the earth blossoms and rejoices, with all the crops just springing up. The seas do then become fit for navigation; and the never-smiling and sulky face of Winter is transformed into a more cheerful aspect. The second sort have done this honour to Midsummer Day, as having it then in their power to rejoice securely over the success of their crops: the seed-crops being by this time got in, and the fruit-crops already

ripe, and the produce still hanging on the trees now drawing to maturity. The third, yet more acute than they have established for the end of the year the most complete maturity and decay of all productions; for this cause do they hold their annual festivals when the Autumn is now drawing to an end. But our ancestors, from the time of that most religious King Numa, paying special honour to the god in question, cast aside the common practice, and as they were of superior understanding, they recognized this deity, and settled to hold the New Year's festival in the present season, at what time the Sun returns to us, leaving the extreme distance of the meridian, and bending his course around Capricorn as his goal, moves from the South towards the North; being about to give us our share of his annual blessings. And that they have thus fixed the time of the New Year's festival out of an accurate understanding of the case, may be easily discerned from the following circumstance—they did not fix the festival upon the *actual day* when the Sun makes the turn, but on the day when it is apparent to all that he is making his progress from the South towards the North. For not yet known to them was the subtlety of those rules which the Chaldæans and Egyptians invented, but which Hipparchus and Ptolemy brought to perfection; but they trusted to their senses, and followed the guidance of natural phenomena. And in this way, as I have said, the matter was discovered to be of such a nature by those who came after them. Immediately after the last month, which is Saturn's, and previous to the festival in question, we celebrate the most solemn of our Games, dedicating it to the honour of the "Invincible Sun," during which it is not lawful for anything cruel (although necessary), which the previous month presented in its Shows, should be perpetrated on this occasion. The *Saturnalia*,<sup>1</sup> being the concluding festival, are closely followed in cyclic order by the Festival of the Sun; the which I hope that the Powers above will grant me frequently to chaunt, and to celebrate; and above all others may

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<sup>1</sup> The Saturnalia lasted the three days following the 16th or 18th December, the festival of the "Sol Invictus" was held on the 25th of the same month.

the Sovereign Sun, lord of the universe! He who proceeding from all eternity in the generative being of the Good, stationed as the central one amidst the central intelligible deities, and replenishing them all with concord, infinite beauty, generative superabundance, and perfect intelligence, and with all blessings collectively without limit of time; and in time present illuminating his station which moves as the centre of all the heavens, his own possession from all eternity! Whilst he imparts his own beauty to every phenomenon of Nature, and fills the universal heaven with as many deities as he contains intelligibly within himself; whilst they multiply round about him without separation, and dwell together with him in unity of species! And nevertheless the region *below the Moon* he embraces by the agency of his perpetual generation, and the benefits flowing out of the *Cyclic Body*; providing for the entire family of Man, and, especially, for our commonwealth; in the same way as he *hath from all eternity created our own soul, having appointed it for minister unto himself*.<sup>1</sup> May He therefore grant unto me that which I have just now prayed for; and moreover to the whole of my empire may He with his good will supply and guard all possible continuance! And to ourselves may He grant success both in religious and secular affairs, so long as He may concede us life! And grant us to live, and to govern in life, as long as it is well-pleasing to *himself*, best for *us*, and expedient to the *public* interests of the Romans.<sup>2</sup>

Thus much, my dear Sallust,<sup>3</sup> upon the threefold operation of the deity have I ventured to write for you, in about three nights' space, having gone over the subject in my memory as far as it was possible: since what I had previously written

<sup>1</sup> A remarkable enunciation of the soul's eternal pre-existence, and derivation from the Sun.

<sup>2</sup> A prayer most remarkably fulfilled! for what a troublous, perhaps disgraceful reign, awaited the enthusiast, had he returned alive from his unsuccessful expedition.

<sup>3</sup> Sallustius or Salustius, to whom this essay is addressed, was the Præfectus Prætorio under the emperor, and his close friend and adviser. Although a pagan, he advised Julian against persecuting the Christians.

to you "upon the Saturnalia"<sup>1</sup> did not prove entirely labour thrown away. But on the same subject you will obtain more complete and more abstruse information by consulting the works upon it composed by the divine Iamblichus: you will find there the extreme limit of human wisdom attained. May the mighty Sun grant me to attain to no less knowledge of himself, and to teach it publicly to all, and privately to such as are worthy to receive it: and as long as the god grants this to us, let us consult in common his well-beloved Iamblichus; out of whose abundance a few things, that have come into my mind, I have here set down. That no other person will treat of this subject more perfectly than *he* has done, I am well aware; not even though he should expend much additional labour in making new discoveries in the research; for in all probability he will go astray from the most correct conception of the nature of the god. It were perhaps an idle attempt (if I were writing this discourse for the sake of giving *instruction*) for me to treat of it at all after what that philosopher has done; but inasmuch as it is my wish only to compose a hymn of *thanksgiving* in honour of the god, I have deemed it quite sufficient to discourse to the best of my ability concerning his nature. I do not think I have wasted words to no purpose: the maxim, "Sacrifice to the immortal gods according to thy means," I accept as applying not merely to *burnt-offerings*, but also to our *praises* addressed unto the gods. I pray for the third time, in return for this my good intention, the Sun lord of the universe to be propitious to me, and to bestow on me a virtuous life, a more perfect understanding, and a superhuman intellect, and a very easy release from the trammels of life at the time appointed: and after that release, an ascension up to himself, and an abiding place with him, if possible, for all time to come; or if *that* be too great a recompense for my past life, many and long-continued<sup>2</sup> revolutions around his presence!

<sup>1</sup> The book has perished; it doubtless was of the same mystic character as this and the following "Hymn."

<sup>2</sup> Before the same soul is again re-united with Matter, and imprisoned in the body: exemption from such thralldom being a reward doled out in measure proportioned to merit during its last probation on earth.





THE  
RULES OF ULPIAN

[A DIGEST OF ROMAN LAW]

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*WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE SAME ON*  
THE GOLDEN AGE OF JURISPRUDENCE

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*AND AN APPENDIX UPON*  
EARLY ROMAN INSTITUTIONS AND THE  
TWELVE TABLES

BY W. A. HUNTER, M.A., LL.D.



## INTRODUCTION

### THE GOLDEN AGE OF JURISPRUDENCE

THE golden age of Jurisprudence is a well-known and almost proverbial expression for the 200 years that intervened between the accession of Augustus and the death of Alexander Severus. This period presents so many features of interest to the student of Roman Legislation that an exhaustive essay upon it might fill a volume, involving as it would the Social, Political and Literary history of Rome. Among the various topics which must present themselves to a writer of the History of Roman Law during the period we have mentioned, the influence and character of the lawyers would necessarily be a prominent one.

In the oldest days of Rome, when the interpretation of the law and the application of its mysteries to daily life were confined to the patricians, when the cultivation of Jurisprudence was seized and retained by the nobility, and when caste privileges dominated every portion of Roman society, the practical and professional element of the lawyer's life was unknown, and the knowledge of those customary observances that stood for law and of the acts and fictions that surrounded them was rather one of the chief instruments for attaining political power.

Various causes tended to disturb this state of things; the publication of a code, the betrayal (a well-known story) of the forms and ceremonies by which the application of the law was masked, the extension of Roman power, the increase of a foreign element, all these things affected the position of the old dominant class. In process of time the ancient privileges of the patrician order in the state were diminished, their claim to undisturbed power interfered with, and their charmed circle invaded: but still the social position of the learned jurisconsult was maintained, and even down to the days of Cicero

the attainment of legal honours and forensic reputation was regarded as one of the safest and surest roads to political distinction and rank.

The accession of Augustus to Imperial honours led to an important change in the status of the Roman Bar. A rivalry so dangerous as that of a body of men formidable from their numbers, from their influence with the people, from their learning and from their thorough acquaintance with all the forms and practices of the state-craft coeval with the constitution itself, a body moreover allied with almost every family of distinction, was not to be endured by one who meant to consolidate his authority and to reign without a rival.

No man knew better than Augustus that force and fear were wrong weapons with which to counteract this opposing element, no man knew better than himself the sacred character of Law and Jurisprudence in the eye of every citizen of Rome, his reverence for the institutions of the city, and the respect with which the professors and expounders of the laws were regarded by him; "To strike down the Jurisconsults was to strike at the city itself,"<sup>1</sup> and therefore measures of a milder nature were requisite. A plan was devised and, as the result shews, crowned with success. This plan was to change the character of the profession by diverting its members from their ancient line of ambition. That was done by granting to a select body out of the whole number of Jurisconsults the hitherto unheard-of privilege of giving official opinions, which though nominally published by the emperor were in effect the authoritative decisions of certain eminent and leading lawyers. The result of this was that a new object of ambition was held up to the eyes of the Jurists and Legists of Rome—a new incentive and one of the most stirring kind was given them to achieve distinction in the ranks of their profession, but the inducement was no longer to cultivate law as a stepping-stone to political advancement:—law was no longer the means to an end, but an end in itself:—and henceforth the aim and object of every leading advocate was to merit the approval of the

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<sup>1</sup> Giraud, *Histoire du droit Romain*.

emperor alone, who was to him that fountain of honour and reward which in old times the people had been. It is unnecessary to pursue the history of this movement further. The wise and politic designs of Augustus were recognized and improved upon by succeeding rulers, especially by Tiberius, Vespasian, Titus and Trajan. Under Adrian the dignity of the Jurisconsult was still further advanced through that well-known provision by which certain *Responsa* were invested with the force of law. Great as the effect of these measures was from a political point of view, from a literary point of view still greater results followed. It is impossible in these few lines to describe adequately the marvellous energy displayed in the cause of learning by the Roman Lawyers of the golden aera. Law was their proper pursuit, but in every branch of literature they shone—Philosophy, Philology, Poetry, Oratory, History, Mathematical and Physical Sciences, to all they devoted themselves and in all they were eminent.

Their varied reading was reflected in their legal writings, their profound learning gave them vantage ground in their professional labours.—“The more we study their works the greater pleasure we derive from the perusal. The wonderful propriety of diction, the lucid structure of the sentences, the exquisite method of the argument, give to the performances of these writers a charm peculiarly their own.”<sup>1</sup> Nor must it be forgotten that their literary fame, their zeal for learning, and their vast energy, were displayed at a time when learning and science were in their decadence. But for the Jurists of Rome the cause of Letters would have perished. Of the men of genius whose names have come down to us and whose writings or whose opinions are worked into the great body of the Roman Law we may particularize five, not so much for their own distinctive merits, as for the importance given to their writings in the celebrated Law of Citations published about A.D. 426. Of these five, GAIUS PAPINIAN, MODESTINUS, PAULUS and ULPIAN, the compilers of the Digest at a later

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<sup>1</sup> *Introduction to the Study of Roman Law*, by John George Phillimore.



period made large use.—In the Theodosian law referred to above the authority of Papinian was pre-eminent, whilst to the writings of Gaius himself a higher impress of authority was given than they had hitherto attained.

That Papinian was a man of undoubted reputation is clear from his position in the state, as well as from the fragments of his writings preserved in the Digest; fellow-pupil, friend and minister of Septimius Severus, he became at an early age Praetorian Prefect and drew upon himself the hatred and vengeance of Caracalla. Famous himself, he had as pupils the two most illustrious lawyers of the succeeding generation, Paulus and Ulpian. The former, a man of great and varied learning, occupied with Ulpian the post of Assessor to the Praetorian Prefect, and attained to high honours in the state. As for Ulpian, the fact that his writings have furnished 2461 laws to the Digest shews the reputation he left and the reverence with which his name was regarded. His chief works were a Commentary on the Edict in eighty-three books; a collection of Opinions in six books and another collection of Responsa in two books. As a lawyer he ranks high for the soundness of his views, for his practical common sense, and for the logical turn of his mind. As a writer he is clear and concise, well deserving the dignity of an authoritative jurist-prudent by his power of marshalling facts and applying legal principles to them. As an instance at once of his juristical skill and of his natural acumen, we may point to his celebrated calculation of the present value of a life-annuity,<sup>1</sup> nor would it be difficult to select other examples.

Of his public life but little is known beyond his official connection with the Emperor Alexander Severus and his assassination by the Praetorian guards. He seems to have been a man of wit and a pleasant companion, whose society was sought after by the most noble and the best in the state. Of the old writers Aelius Lampridius gives us most information regarding Ulpian and his political and professional career; but we need not enter into further details, for those who are desirous to learn all that is known about him may refer to the

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<sup>1</sup> Digest 35. 2. 68.

two accounts of his life prefixed to Schulting's *Tituli ex Corpore Ulpiani*, in that author's *Jurisprudentia Vetus Antejustiniana*, one by John Bertrand, president of Toulouse, and the other by William Groot; whilst in the *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography* by Smith appears a somewhat elaborate sketch of him and his writings.

Just as there is but one manuscript of Gaius' Commentaries in existence, so is there but one of Ulpian's Rules. This is now in the Vatican Library, numbered 1128 in its catalogue, having originally belonged to the abbey of St. Benedict at Fleury-sur-Loire, whence it was conveyed to Rome after the destruction of that religious house by the Calvinists in 1562. It is generally believed that all the modern editions of Ulpian's Rules are derived from this codex, Heimbach alone maintaining that the first edition of all, that of John Tilius, was derived from another codex now destroyed. But whether this be so or not is after all of little practical importance, for Heimbach himself allows that the Codex Vaticanus and the Codex Tilianus, if the latter ever existed, were either transcripts of one and the same original, or one copied from the other.

Tilius described the work, when he introduced it to the learned world at Paris in 1549, as "a mere epitome of doctrines contained in a variety of works by Ulpian;" a view now quite exploded, for almost all the best modern authorities hold that the manuscript is a genuine fragment of one and only one work of Ulpian, namely the *Liber Singularis Regularum*: so that the only point still open to debate is how far it has been mutilated, and whether intentionally or by accident. It is true that Puchta holds to the epitome theory, but even he regards the codex as an epitome of the "Rules" only, and his view meets with little favour.

Mommsen's idea is, that about Constantine's time some man, *parum doctus et incredibiliter stupidus*, "little learned and incredibly stupid," partly abridged and partly rewrote the treatise to make it coincide with the law of his time. Against this theory Huschke argues that the excellent lawyers of that period would never have accepted an abridgment that did not, in the main, coincide with its original: and he further points

to passages, such as I. 21; XX. 2, 10; xxvii. 1, where the ancient law is *not* removed from the text. From this evidence and also from the fact that important matters are lost which must have been treated of in the original work, and which certainly were in force in Constantine's reign, he maintains that the omissions are throughout the result of accident rather than of design, his theory being that the transcriber of the one surviving manuscript (apparently written about the tenth century, and probably in Gaul) put together all he could find of Ulpian's acknowledged work; but that owing partly to his inability to discover the whole, and partly to subsequent mutilation of what he managed to collect, the work has come down to us in its present dilapidated condition.

It seems pretty clear that the transcript of the tenth century, whether embracing the greater part or only a fraction of Ulpian's original treatise, has been mutilated by the loss of a large section towards its conclusion. Ulpian's work as a whole runs parallel with that of Gaius. It is true that topics are usually treated more briefly in the "Rules;" still they occur in the same order as in the "Commentaries." It is true also that particular attention is given in the first-named treatise to points which Gaius either omitted or dismissed with a word or two, such as *dos*, *donatio inter virum et uxorem* and the *Lex Papia Poppaea*: but these extended digressions either are introduced where Gaius' briefer notices occur, or when referring to matters upon which Gaius is absolutely silent, they are brought in just where we can imagine the older writer would have introduced them, if they had not been excluded by the plan of his work. And yet although Ulpian's treatise is parallel with that of Gaius so far as it goes, it stops abruptly, and omits not only all the matter touched upon by the earlier writer in his Fourth Commentary, but even the subjects contained in the sections running from the 55th to the end of the Third Commentary. From the evident appearance of a general parallelism, and from the fact of the sudden defect just mentioned, we hold that the missing portion at the conclusion of the "Rules" is not merely a few lines or even pages, but almost a half of the work.

If we must venture a theory as to the object with which

Ulpian wrote, we should attach no little importance to what has been already named, the fact that he interpolates so largely although following the arrangement of Gaius in the main. Gaius wrote a handbook for students, with the intention of putting clearly before them the leading principles of Roman Law. His object was not so much to enter into details of practice as to present his readers with a comprehensive outline of the Roman Law as a system. On the other hand Ulpian's aim was, we venture to think, entirely different: he wished to draw up a handbook for the use of practising lawyers. Now that a book of practice is improved by a systematic arrangement is obvious: Ulpian therefore, writing in the reign of Caracalla (see xvii. 2), took, as a model, the educational treatise which his brother lawyer had published a few years previously, introducing into it important and necessary modifications. Whilst then, on the one hand, he omitted all antiquarian disquisitions as out of place in a book of practice, on the other he introduced large interpolations on such matters as *dos* and its *retentiones*. These topics Gaius (writing for beginners) had passed over unnoticed, because they involved more detail than principle, because also a student could very well comprehend the general scheme of the Roman Law, without any special acquaintance with them. Ulpian, on the contrary, in a work intended for practitioners, was obliged to treat at length the rules relating to matters of such practical value as those above mentioned. Divorces were everyday occurrences at Rome; so that suits with regard to *dotes* and *retentiones* must have filled the court-lists of the time, and formed a profitable branch of a lawyer's practice: a knowledge therefore of all the regulations on these topics was to such an one of the highest importance.

The very title prefixed to Ulpian's work bears out our view. "Principles" (*institutiones*) are for beginners, but "Rules" (*regulæ*) aid the memory of those who have passed through their course of study, and are now engaged in the active business of their profession.



# THE RULES OF ULPIAN

## ON CLASSES OF LAWS

1. A PERFECT LAW is one which forbids something to be done, and rescinds it if it be done, of which kind is the Lex.

. . . An imperfect law is one which forbids something to be done, and yet if it be done neither rescinds it nor imposes a penalty on him who has acted contrary to the law: of which character is the Lex Cincia prohibiting donations beyond a specified amount, except those to certain persons, relations for instance; and yet not revoking a gift in excess. 2. A law short of perfect is one which forbids something to be done, and if it be done does not rescind it, but imposes a penalty on him who has acted contrary to the law: of which character is the Lex Furia Testamentaria, prohibiting all persons, save those specially exempted, from taking more than a thousand *asses* as a legacy or gift in prospect of death, and appointing a fourfold penalty against anyone who has taken a larger sum.

3. A law is either "rogated," that is to say introduced: or "abrogated," that is to say a former law is revoked: or "derogated," that is to say a part of a former law is revoked: or "subrogated," that is to say something is added to a former law: or "obrogated," that is some portion of a former law is altered.

4. Customs are the tacit consent of a people established by long-continued habit.

### I. ON FREEDMEN

5. There are three classes of freedmen, viz. Roman citizens, Junian Latins, and those in the category of *dediticii*.

6. Roman citizens are freedmen manumitted in the regular mode, that is to say by *vindicta*, *census* or *testament*, and in contravention of no regulation.



7. The manumission by *vindicta* takes place before a magistrate of the Roman people, as a Consul, a Praetor, or a Proconsul.

8. Manumission was effected by *census* in olden times when slaves at the quinquennial registration entered themselves on the roll amongst the Roman citizens by order of their masters.

9. The liberty of those who have been manumitted by testament results from a law of the Twelve Tables which confirms testamentary gifts of liberty in these words: "as one has disposed of his own property, so let the right be."

10. Latins are freedmen who have not been manumitted in regular form, those for instance manumitted privately (*inter amicos*), provided no regulation be contravened: and these in olden times the Praetor merely used to protect in the semblance of liberty; for in strict law they remained slaves. But at the present day they are free by strict law on account of the Lex Junia, by which *lex* those manumitted in the presence of our friends were styled Junian Latins.

11. Those are in the category of *dediticii* who have been put in chains by their masters as a punishment, or who have been branded, or who have been tortured for a misdeed and found guilty, or who have been delivered over to fight with the sword or against wild beasts, or cast into a gladiatorial school or into a prison for the like cause, and have afterwards been manumitted by any form. And these rules the Lex Aelia Sentia establishes.

12. By the same *lex* it was provided that a slave under thirty years of age when manumitted by *vindicta* should not become a Roman citizen, unless cause for manumission had been proved before the council; in fact it lays down that a slave of that age manumitted without application to the council remains a slave still: but when he is manumitted by testament it directs him to be regarded as though he were holding his freedom at his master's will, and therefore he becomes a Latin.

13. The same *lex* prohibits a master under twenty years of age from manumitting a slave, unless he have proved cause before the council. 13a. The council consists at Rome of

five senators and five Roman knights, but in the provinces of twenty *reciperators*, Roman citizens. 14. A slave ordered to be free and instituted heir in a testament by an insolvent master, although he be under thirty years of age, or so circumstanced that he ought to become a *dediticius*, yet becomes a Roman citizen and heir: provided only no one else be heir under that testament. But if two or more be ordered to become free and heirs, the one first-named becomes free and heir: and this too the Lex Aelia Sentia enacts. 15. The same *lex* forbids manumissions in fraud of creditors or a patron.

16. He who holds a slave merely by Bonitary title and not also by Quiritary, makes him a Latin by manumission. A slave belongs to a man by Bonitary title only in such a case as the following: when a Roman citizen has bought a slave from another Roman citizen, and the slave has been delivered to him, but not transferred by mancipation or cession in court, nor possessed by him for a year. For so long as some one of these circumstances be wanting, that slave belongs to the purchaser by Bonitary title, but to the vendor by Quiritary.

17. A woman under tutelage, and a pupil, male or female, cannot manumit, except with the tutor's authorization.

18. If one of two joint-owners manumit a common slave, he loses his portion and it accrues to his partner; at any rate if he manumit him in a form whereby he would have made him a Roman citizen if he had had the sole property in him. For if he manumit him privately it is generally held that the act is void.

19. If the usufruct of a slave belong to one man and the ownership to another, and he be manumitted by him who has the ownership, he does not become free, but is a slave without a master.<sup>1</sup>

20. A gift of liberty cannot be bestowed in any testament, except that of a soldier, to take effect after the death of the heir, nor (can it be inserted) before the institution of the heir. 21. A gift of liberty inserted between the appoint-

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<sup>1</sup> "But only so long as the usufruct lasts; after that he becomes a Latin." Mommsen.

ments of two heirs is void, if both take up the inheritance: but if the one first-named alone take it up, the gift is valid according to the ancient law. But since the passing of the Lex Papia Poppaea, which makes to lapse the portion of one who does not take up the inheritance, it has been ruled that the gift stands good in case the heir first-named has either the right derived from children or the ancient right;<sup>1</sup> but when he has neither of these rights, it is decided that the gift does not stand good, because the legatees who have children become heirs in the place of the heir who fails to accept;<sup>2</sup> but there are persons who maintain that it stands good in this case too. 22. A slave who is ordered in a testament to become free becomes free the instant that even one of the heirs takes up the inheritance.<sup>3</sup> 23. Full freedom can be given by testament to those slaves who belonged to the testator in Quiritary right both at the time of his making the testament and at his death.

24. The Lex Furia Caninia directs that not more than two slaves out of three shall be manumitted by testament; allows a half to be manumitted out of a number between four and ten; a third out of any number between ten and thirty, but still allowing five at least to be manumitted, just as they would have been out of the antecedent number; a fourth of any number from thirty up to a hundred, but, as before, permitting ten to be manumitted on the reckoning of the antecedent number; a fifth of any number from one hun-

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<sup>1</sup> We see from Tit. xviii. that ascendants and descendants of the testator to the third degree were exempted from the provisions of the Lex Papia Poppaea. These therefore are the persons referred to as having the *jus antiquum*.

<sup>2</sup> These legatees are by hypothesis named in the testament subsequently to the gift of freedom, for that gift is *inter medias institutiones*. Hence, when they become heirs in the place of the first-named heir, all the heirs are posterior to the legacy of freedom; which is therefore void: for it can only subsist as a charge upon an antecedent heir, as stated in I. 20.

<sup>3</sup> In this case the gift of liberty is supposed to be after the institution of all the heirs, or at any rate after that of the one who accepts the inheritance.

dred to five hundred, but still enabling twenty-five to be liberated on the reckoning of the antecedent number; and finally it directs that not more than a hundred in all shall be set free by virtue of any man's testament.

25. The same *lex* provides that gifts of freedom shall be conferred on slaves by name in a testament.

## II. ON STATULIBERI

1. The name *Statuliber* is applied to a slave ordered in a testament to become free under some condition. 2. Because the *statuliber*, so long as the condition is pendent, is a slave of the heir; when it is fulfilled, is at once free. 3. The *statuliber*, whether alienated by the heir, or acquired by anyone through usucapion, carries with him the condition of his freedom.

4. If ordered to be free under the condition: "if he give 10,000 sesterces to the heir," he will attain to freedom, even though he have been alienated by the heir, by giving the money to his purchaser; and this a law of the Twelve Tables provides. 5. If anything be done by the heir to prevent the *statuliber* complying with the condition, he becomes free just as though the condition had been fulfilled. 6. Also if he be ordered to give money to some stranger and so become free, and be prepared to give it, but he to whom he was ordered to give it refuse to accept or die before accepting, he becomes free just as though he had given it.

7. Liberty can neither be given directly, in such phrase as "Be thou free," "Let him be free," "I order him to be free:" or by *fideicommissum*, for instance in the words, "I request, I entrust to my heir's good faith that he manumit my slave Stichus." 8. One ordered in express terms to be freed becomes a freedman of the testator or *libertus orcinus*: but one whose liberty is given him by *fideicommissum* becomes the freedman of the manumittor and not of the testator. 9. Any man who can be charged by *fideicommissum* to perform anything, can also be charged by *fideicommissum* to confer freedom. 10. Liberty can be given by *fideicommissum* either to the testator's own slave, to the slave of an heir or legatee, or



to the slave of any stranger. 11. If liberty be given to a stranger's slave by *fideicommissum* and the owner will not sell him for a fair price, the liberty is extinguished, because no calculation of price in lieu of liberty is possible. 12. As liberty can be given, so also can it be taken away either by a testament or by codicils confirmed in a testament; provided only it be taken away in the same manner in which it was given.

### III. ON LATINS

1. Latins obtain Roman citizenship in the following ways: by grant of the emperor, by children, by iteration, by military service, by a ship, by building, by the trade of baking;<sup>1</sup> and besides, in virtue of a *senatus-consultum*, a woman obtains it by bearing three children. 2. A Latin obtains Roman citizenship by grant of the emperor, if he acquires the right through direct request to him. 3. A Latin obtains Roman citizenship by children, if at the time of his manumission he was under the age of thirty years: for it was provided by the Lex Junia that if a Latin take to wife a Roman citizen or a Latin, making attestation that he marries her for the purpose of obtaining children, he can, after the birth of a son or daughter and their attainment of the age of one year, prove his case before the Praetor or the governor of a province and become a Roman citizen, both himself and his son or daughter, and his wife; that is to say if she too be a Latin; for if the wife be a Roman citizen, her offspring also is a Roman citizen by virtue of a *senatus-consultum* passed at the instance of the late emperor Hadrian. 4. A Latin becomes a Roman citizen by iteration, if after the gift of Latinity has been conferred on him when over thirty years of age, he be a second time manumitted in due form by the person whose slave he was in Quiritary right. But by virtue of a *senatus-consultum* it is allowed such an one to acquire Roman citizenship by children also.

5. A Latin receives Roman citizenship by military service

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<sup>1</sup> Bakers had other privileges; for instance they were allowed to decline a tutorship.



in virtue of the Lex Visellia,<sup>1</sup> if he have served six years in the Roman guards: but afterwards by a *senatus-consultum* it was allowed him to obtain Roman citizenship by serving three years in the guards. 6. A Latin receives Roman citizenship, in virtue of an edict of the late emperor Claudius, by a ship, if he have built one of the burden of not less than 10,000 *modii* and imported corn in it to Rome for six years. . . .

#### IV. ON THOSE WHO ARE SUI JURIS

1. Those who are heads of their own families are *sui juris*, that is the father of a family, and the mother of a family.<sup>2</sup>

2. Those sprung from a known mother, but an unknown father, are called *spurious*.

#### V. ON THOSE WHO ARE UNDER POTESTAS

1. Children born from a lawful marriage are under the *potestas* of their parents.

2. It is a lawful marriage, if there be *conubium* between those who contract the marriage, if the man be of the age of puberty as well as the woman of the age of child-bearing, and if they both consent, supposing them to be *sui juris*, or if their parents also consent, supposing them to be under *potestas*.

3. *Conubium* is the right of marrying a wife. 4. Roman citizens have *conubium* with Roman citizens; but with Latins and foreigners only when there has been a special grant to that effect. 5. With slaves there is no *conubium*. 6. Between ascendants and descendants in any degree without limitation there is no *conubium*. Formerly also marriages

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<sup>1</sup> Introduced by L. Visellius Varro in the time of Claudius.

<sup>2</sup> Cicero (*Top.* 4) states that a wife was *mater familias* only when under *manus*. Aulus Gellius (18. 6) says the same. But during her husband's life-time a wife *in manu* was certainly not *princeps familiae*, for she was regarded as a daughter of her husband: she would therefore become *princeps familiae* only on the death of the husband: and her *familia* would consist of herself only, for "mulier familiae suae et caput et finis est."

could not be contracted between those collaterally related within the fourth degree; but now it is allowable to take a wife even of the third degree; but only a brother's daughter, and not also a sister's daughter or the sister of a father or a mother, although they are in the same degree. Lastly we cannot marry one who has been our step-mother or step-daughter, daughter-in-law, or mother-in-law. 7. If any man marry a woman whom he is prohibited to marry, he contracts an incestuous marriage, and therefore his children do not come under his *potestas*, but are *spurious*, like those born out of wedlock.

8. If there be *conubium* between the parents, the children always follow the father: if there be not *conubium* they follow the condition of the mother: excepting anyone born from a foreigner and a Roman woman, for he is a foreigner from his birth, inasmuch as the Lex Mensia orders that a child sprung from a foreigner on either side shall follow the condition of his inferior parent. 9. The offspring of a Roman citizen and a Latin woman is a Latin from his birth, and that of a free man and a slave woman is a slave; for there being no *conubium* in these cases, the offspring follows the mother. 10. The time of conception is regarded in the case of those who are born from a lawful marriage; that of birth in the case of those conceived illegitimately: for instance, if a female slave have conceived, and then after manumission bear her child, the child she bears is free: for as she did not conceive legitimately and is herself free at the time of birth, her offspring is free also.

## VI. ON MARRIAGE-PORTIONS

1. A marriage-portion is either given, declared or promised.

2. A woman about to marry can *declare* a marriage-portion, and so can the debtor of a woman, provided he does so at her order: and so can a male ascendant of a woman related to her through a line of males, as a father or a paternal grandfather. Any person can *give* or *promise* a marriage-portion.

3. A marriage-portion is said to be either "profectitious,"

*i.e.* one which the father of the woman has given: or “adventitious,” *i.e.* one which has been given by somebody else.

4. If the woman die during the continuance of the marriage a marriage-portion which proceeded from the father returns to the father, a fifth being retained in the husband’s control for each child as far as the marriage-portion will go. But if the father be no longer alive, it remains with the husband. 5. An adventitious portion, on the contrary, always remains in the husband’s hands, unless the donor made a stipulation that it should be returned to him; and such a marriage-portion has the specific name of “receptitious.”

6. When a divorce takes place, the woman herself has the action for the wife’s property, *i.e.* the suit for recovery of the marriage-portion, if she be *sui juris*; but if she be under the *potestas* of her father, he has the action in the joint name of his daughter and himself: and whether the marriage-portion be adventitious or profectitious makes no matter. 7. If the woman die after a divorce has taken place, an action does not lie for her heir, unless the husband made delay in restoring the marriage-portion to his wife.

8. If the marriage-portion consists of things weighed, numbered or measured, it is restored by instalments at the end of one, two and three years respectively:<sup>1</sup> unless there have been an agreement for its immediate restoration. Other marriage-portions are restored at once.

9. Retentions out of a marriage-portion are made either on account of children, or on account of immorality, or on account of expenses, or on account of donations, or on account of abstractions.

10. Retention is made on account of children, if the divorce take place through the fault of the woman or of her father under whose *potestas* she is: for in such case a sixth is retained out of the marriage-portion on account of each child: but not a greater number of sixths than three. 11. A marriage-portion which has once undergone the retention of

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<sup>1</sup> The *dos* was usually paid over to the husband by the father in three instalments,—sometimes in more by special agreement:—therefore when returned would naturally be paid back in the same way.

sixths, cannot undergo it again, if the marriage be renewed, unless the marriage be varied.

12. Retention is made for immorality;—a sixth for each immorality of a grosser kind, an eighth for immorality of a lighter kind. Adulteries alone constitute the grosser immorality, all others are the lighter. 13. In the case of a marriage-portion which ought to be returned by annual instalments, the immorality of a husband is punished by making him restore it at once for grosser immorality, and by instalments at intervals of six months for lighter immorality: whilst in the case of that which is usually restored at once, he is ordered to restore so much out of profits as the payment in advance would amount to in the case of a marriage-portion returnable by three yearly payments.<sup>1</sup>

14. Of expenses there are three kinds: for they are styled either necessary, or profitable, or ornamental. 15. Expenses are “necessary” where the marriage-portion would be deteriorated by their not being incurred; as, for instance, if any one repair a falling house. 16. “Profitable” expenses are such, that if they were not incurred the marriage-portion would not be deteriorated, but by their being incurred it is made more productive; as, for instance, if a man plant vineyards or oliveyards. 17. “Ornamental” expenses are such, that if they were forborne the marriage-portion would suffer no deterioration, and by their being incurred it is not made more productive; which is the case with lawns and pictures and such like.

## VII. ON THE LAW OF GIFTS BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE

1. A gift between husband and wife does not stand good except in certain cases, that is, in prospect of death, in prospect of divorce, and to procure the manumission of a slave. Besides a woman is allowed by imperial constitutions to make

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<sup>1</sup> A calculation is made of the amount he would have lost by having to pay at once a marriage-portion properly returnable in three instalments:—then to the marriage-portion, which he pays back at once according to agreement, a further sum is added equal to that loss,

a gift to her husband to the end that he may receive from the emperor the distinction of senatorial or equestrian rank, or some honour of the same nature.

2. If the wife in prospect of a divorce abstract property from her husband, she will further be liable in the action "for things abstracted."

3. When a husband has bound himself for his wife or spent money upon her property, on the occurrence of a divorce it is usual for him to assure himself on that account by a tribunician stipulation.<sup>1</sup>

4. Those children too are under the *potestas* of their parents whose case has been proved, after a marriage has been contracted under a misapprehension between persons of unequal condition.<sup>2</sup> For by a *senatus-consultum* if a Roman citizen have in ignorance married a Latin or foreign woman or a woman in the category of *dediticii*, taking her for a Roman citizen, or if a Roman woman have been married by mistake to a foreigner or one in the category of *dediticii*, either thinking him a Roman citizen or even thinking him a Latin and intending to take advantage of the Lex Aelia Sentia, on proof of the case on behalf of the children born from that marriage, Roman citizenship is given both to the children and the parents, unless the latter be in the category of *dediticii*: and thereby the children come under the *potestas* of their parents.

#### VIII. ON ADOPTIONS

1. Not only are actual children under the *potestas* of their ascendants, but adopted children also. 2. Adoption takes place either by authority of the *populus*, or by that of the Praetor or the governor of a province. That adoption which takes place by authority of the *populus* has the special

<sup>1</sup> "That is, the plebeian tribunes, when application is made to them by husbands called upon to restore a marriage-portion, will interfere on their behalf unless they are secured by their wives entering into this stipulation." Huschke.

<sup>2</sup> The subject of *potestas* is now resumed from v. 1, the law as to marriages and marriage-portions forming a parenthesis extending from v. 2 to vii. 3 inclusive.



name of arrogation. 3. By authority of the *populus* those *sui juris* are arrogated: by authority of the Praetor those under *potestas* are given in adoption by their ascendants. 4. Arrogation takes place at Rome only, but adoption in the provinces too in the presence of the governors thereof. 5. By authority of the Praetor or the governor of a province both males and females, those under puberty and those over puberty, can be adopted. Women are not arrogated even at the present day by authority of the Roman *populus*; but pupils, who also in former times could not be arrogated, now can after investigation of their case, by virtue of a constitution of the late emperor Antoninus Pius. 6. One who cannot procreate, as an eunuch-born, can adopt by either method. The same rule applies also to an unmarried person. 7. Likewise he who has no son, can adopt a person to stand to him as grandson. 7a. But women cannot adopt by either method, because they have not even their actual children under their *potestas*. 8. If a person who is *sui juris* give himself in arrogation, his children also pass under the arrogator's *potestas* in the capacity of grandchildren.

#### IX. ON THOSE WHO ARE UNDER MANUS

I. A woman comes under *manus* by a conferreation in a set form of words uttered in the presence of ten witnesses, and by the performance of a solemn sacrifice, in which a cake of fine flour is used.

#### X. HOW THOSE WHO ARE UNDER POTESTAS, MANUS OR MANCIPIMUM, ARE SET FREE FROM THE TIE

I. Descendants are freed from the *potestas* of their ascendants by emancipation, *i.e.* if they are manumitted after being mancipated. But a son becomes *sui juris* only after being mancipated three times and manumitted three times: for a law of the Twelve Tables directs this in the following words: "if a father sell his son three times, let the son be free from the father." Whilst descendants other than a son, whether male or female, become *sui juris* by one mancipation and one

manumission. 2. A son and a daughter become *sui juris* by the death of their father; but grandsons become *sui juris* by the death of their grandfather, only in case they will not fall under the *potestas* of their father on the grandfather's death; for example, if at the time of their grandfather's death their father either be dead or released from *potestas*: for they come into their father's *potestas* on the death of their grandfather, if at that moment their father be in his *potestas*. 3. If the father or son be interdicted from fire and water, the paternal *potestas* is destroyed, because one who is interdicted from fire and water becomes a foreigner, and neither can a foreigner have a Roman citizen under his *potestas* nor a Roman citizen a foreigner. 4. If a father be taken by the enemy, although he becomes a slave of the enemy, yet on his return he recovers all his original rights by the rule of postliminy. But so long as he remains with the enemy, his parental *potestas* over his son is for the time suspended: and on his return he will have his son under his *potestas*, but if he die there the son will be *sui juris*. So too if the son be taken by the enemy, the parental *potestas* will in like manner be suspended for the time by the rule of postliminy. 5. Those also cease to be under the *potestas* of their ascendants who are admitted flamens of Jupiter or elected vestal virgins.

## XI. ON TUTELAGES

1. Tutors are appointed both to males and females: but to males only whilst they remain under the age of puberty, on account of their infirmity of age: to females, however, both under and over the age of puberty, as well on account of their infirmity of sex as on account of their ignorance of forensic matters.

2. Tutors are either statutable, appointed by *senatus-consulta*, or introduced by custom.

3. Statutable tutors are those originating from any *lex*: but those are more specially styled statutable who are introduced by a law of the Twelve Tables, whether in direct terms, as agnates are, or constructively, as are patrons. 4. Agnates are male relatives connected on the father's side, tracing

through the male sex, and of the same family,<sup>1</sup> as brothers on the father's side, a father's brothers, a brother's sons, the sons of two brothers.

5. He who has manumitted a free person mancipated to him either by an ascendant or by a *coemptionator*, becomes tutor because of his analogy to a patron, and is called a fiduciary tutor.

6. Statutable tutors can transfer their tutorship to another by means of a cession in court. 7. He to whom the tutorship is ceded is called a cessician tutor; and if he either die, or suffer *capitis diminutio*, or cede the tutorship again to another, the tutorship returns to the statutable tutor: and so too if the statutable tutor die or suffer *capitis diminutio*, the cessician tutorship is also extinguished. 8. So far as the agnates are concerned, cessician tutorship does not exist at the present day; since it used to be allowed to make cession of the tutelages of females only and not of those of males; and the Lex Claudia abolished the statutable tutelages of women, except when held by patrons.

9. A statutable tutorship is lost by *capitis diminutio*. 10. There are three varieties of *capitis diminutio*, *maxima*, *media*, and *minima*. 11. *Capitis diminutio maxima* is that by which both citizenship and liberty are lost, as in the case of a man being sold for not enrolling himself on the censor's register, or in that of a woman who cohabits with another person's slave against his master's warning, and is made his slave in accordance with the *senatus-consultum* of Claudius. 12. *Capitis diminutio media* is the name applied when citizenship alone is lost and liberty retained; which is the case with one interdicted from fire and water. 13. *Capitis diminutio minima* is that whereby the status only of a man is changed, his citizenship and liberty being unaltered; a result which follows on adoption and the passing under *manus*.

14. Tutors appointed by name in a testament are also confirmed by the same law of the Twelve Tables in these words: "In accordance with the testamentary disposition

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<sup>1</sup> Emancipation or adoption broke the agnatic tie previously subsisting.

which a man has made regarding his family, his money or the tutelage of his property, so let the right be:" and these tutors are called *dative*.

15. Tutors can be given in a testament by ascendants to those descendants who are under their *potestas*. 16. Any persons with whom the testator has *testamenti factio* can be appointed tutors in a testament, except a Junian Latin. For a Latin has *testamenti factio*, and yet cannot be appointed tutor; the Lex Junia forbidding it. If the tutor appointed in a testament suffer *capitis diminutio*, he does not lose his tutorship: but if he renounce the tutorship, he ceases to be tutor; and to renounce it is to state that he declines to be tutor. Further a testamentary tutor cannot transfer his office by cession in court; whereas a statutable tutor can get rid of it by cession in court, but not by mere renunciation.

18. The Lex Atilia orders that when women or pupils have no tutors some shall be given to them by the Praetor and the majority of the Tribunes of the Plebs, and these we call Atilian tutors. But as the Lex Atilia is in force at Rome only, it has been provided by the Lex Julia et Titia that in the provinces also tutors shall in like manner be appointed by their governors. 19. The Lex Junia orders that the tutor of a female Latin or of a male Latin under the age of puberty shall be the person to whom they belonged in Quiritary right before their manumission. 20. By the *Lex Julia de maritandis ordinibus* a tutor is given by the Praetor Urbanus to any woman or virgin bound to marry under that law, in order that he may give, assign or promise her marriage-portion, if she have a pupil for her statutable tutor. But afterwards the senate decreed that tutors should be appointed in the provinces also by the governors thereof in like manner under similar circumstances. 21. The senate has further decreed that another tutor shall be appointed in the place of a dumb or mad tutor for the purpose of settling the marriage-portion. 22. Likewise by a *senatus-consultum* a tutor is appointed to a woman whose tutor is absent, unless the absentee be a patron: for one cannot be applied for by a freed woman in the place of an absent patron, except to take up an inheritance or to arrange a marriage. And the same appoint-

ment is permitted in the case of a patron's son being a pupil.

23. Besides this the senate has decreed that if the tutor of a pupil, whether male or female, be removed from his tutorship as untrustworthy, or excused for a just reason, another tutor may be appointed in his place.

24. A tutor is appointed by custom to a woman or pupil who wishes to sue the proper tutor under a *lex* or by statutable proceedings, that she may act under his authorization (for the proper tutor cannot authorize in a matter concerning himself): and such an one is called a Praetorian tutor, because it is the custom for him to be appointed by the Praetor Urbanus.

25. The tutors of pupils, male or female, both transact their business and give their authorization: but the tutors of women give their authorization only.

26. If there be several tutors, they must all give their authorization to each individual transaction, except they be testamentary tutors, for in their case the authorization of any one is enough.

27. The authorization of their tutor is needful for women in the following matters: if they take proceedings under a *lex* or by statutable action, if they bind themselves by contract, if they transact any business connected with the civil law,<sup>1</sup> if they permit one of their freedwomen to cohabit with another person's slave, if they alienate a thing mancipable. Further than this, pupils require their tutor's authorization for the alienation of things non-mancipable.

28. Males are set free from tutelage by puberty: and the Cassians say that he is of puberty who shows the fact by his bodily development, *i.e.*, who can procreate; whilst the Proculians say that he is who has completed his fourteenth year; but Priscus maintains that he is of puberty in whom both requirements are fulfilled, *viz.* both bodily development and the number of years. 28a. Women on the other hand are liberated from tutelage by prerogative of three children: freedwomen who are under the tutelage of a patron are liberated from it only by prerogative of four children.

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<sup>1</sup> *e. g.*, a *cessio in jure*, or a *mancipatio*, or an *auditio hereditatis*.



## XII. ON CURATORS

1. Curators are either statutable, *i.e.* such as are given under a law of the Twelve Tables, or honorary, *i.e.* such as are appointed by the Praetor. 2. A law of the Twelve Tables orders a madman, and likewise a prodigal interdicted from the management of his property, to be in the curation of his agnates. 3. A curator is appointed by the Praetor, being such person as the Praetor himself chooses, to prodigal freedmen, and likewise to free-born persons who are made heirs by the testament of their ascendant and criminally waste his goods: for to such persons a curator could not be given under the law, inasmuch as the freeman is heir to his father not on intestacy but by his testament; and the freedman cannot be heir to his father in any way, for he is not even considered to have a father, there being no relationship among slaves. 4. Moreover the Praetor by the *Lex Plaetoria* gives a curator to one who has just attained puberty, but cannot properly superintend his own business. . . .

## XIII. ON THE UNMARRIED, THE CHILDLESS, AND THE FATHER WHO HAS LOST HIS CHILDREN

1. By the *Lex Julia* senators and their descendants are forbidden to marry freedwomen, or women who have themselves followed the profession of the stage, or whose father or mother has done so; 2, and both they and all other free-born persons are forbidden to marry a common prostitute, or a procuress, or a woman manumitted by a procurer or procuress, or a woman caught in adultery, or one condemned in a public action, or one who has followed the profession of the stage; and the *senatus-consultum Mauricianum* adds one condemned by the senate. . . .

XIV. ON THE PENALTY OF THE *LEX JULIA*

1. The *Lex Julia* allows women a respite<sup>1</sup> from its re-

<sup>1</sup> See App. (G): where it is explained that by the *vacatio* above-named is meant a permission to women to take without the usual qualification legacies, inheritances or lapses devolving on them within the specified periods after their husband's death or their divorce.

quirements for one year after the death of a husband, and for six months after a divorce: but the Lex Papia allows a respite for two years after the death of a husband and for a year and six months after a divorce. . . .

#### XV. ON TENTHS

1. A husband and wife can receive one from the other a tenth on account of their marriage. And if they have children by another marriage surviving, they can, in addition to the tenth on the title of their marriage, take further tenths in number equal to that of their children. 2. Likewise a son or daughter common to them and lost after his or her naming-day adds one-tenth, and two lost after their naming-days add two tenths.<sup>1</sup>

3. Besides the tenth, a husband or wife can also receive the usufruct of a third part of the consort's goods: and when they have had children, the ownership of the same amount: and in addition to this the wife over and above the tenth can take her marriage-portion if bequeathed to her as a legacy.

#### XVI. ON THE POWER OF TAKING THE WHOLE AS BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE.

1. Sometimes husband and wife can receive, one from the other, the entire inheritance, for instance if both or either of them be not yet of the age at which the *lex* insists on children, *i. e.* if either the husband be under 25, or the wife under 20 years of age; also if both of them have, whilst their marriage subsists, exceeded the ages limited by the Lex Papia, *i. e.* the husband 60, the wife 50; likewise if relations within the sixth degree have married. 1a. There is also complete *testamenti factio* between them, if they have obtained from the Emperor the privileges attaching to children, or if the husband be absent on public business, both whilst he is still absent and within a year after he has ceased to be absent,

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<sup>1</sup> Festus says the naming-day was the eighth or ninth after birth.

or if they have a son or daughter born from their union,<sup>1</sup> or have a lost son of the age of fourteen or a daughter of the age of twelve: or have lost two children of the age of three years, or three after their naming-days, provided nevertheless that even one child lost at any age under puberty gives them the right of receiving the whole estate within a period of one year and six months from the death. Likewise if the wife within ten months after her husband's death bear a child by him, she takes the whole of his goods.

2. Sometimes they cannot take anything one from the other, *i.e.* when they have contracted a marriage contrary to the Lex Julia et Papia Poppaea, when for instance any free-born man has married a woman of abandoned character, or when a senator has married a freedwoman.

3. A man who has conformed to neither *lex* within his sixtieth year, or a woman who has not done so within her fiftieth, although after such age exempt from compliance according to the rules of the *leges* themselves, yet will be liable to their standing penalties by reason of the *senatus-consultum Persicianum*.<sup>2</sup> 4. But by the *senatus-consultum Claudianum*

<sup>1</sup> This is to mark the fact that the words "habet liberos, non habet liberos" in the Lex Papia Poppaea do not render it needful for two or more children to be born of the marriage, but even one will suffice.

<sup>2</sup> The Lex Papia says, Heineccius, freed men and women of the ages just named from the penalties of celibacy: and Tiberius did not forbid marriages between these persons (any more than the Lex Papia had done), but made such unions unavailing to save the parties from the penalties of the law, laying it down as a presumption *juris et de jure* that no children could be born from them: and this rule was embodied in the *senatus-consultum* of Persicus, consul three years before Tiberius' death.

The *senatus-consultum Claudianum* allowed the marriage of a man over sixty with a woman under fifty to save the former from the penalties of the law, because from such a marriage there was some chance of issue.

The *senatus-consultum Calvisianum*, on the other hand, forbade the penalties to be remitted when the wife was above fifty and the husband under sixty, because from this marriage there was no reasonable prospect of children.

a man above sixty who marries a woman under fifty, will be accounted as if he had married whilst under sixty. But if a woman above fifty be married to a man under sixty, the marriage is styled "unequal," and by the *senatus-consultum Calvisianum* is ordered to be of no avail for taking inheritance, legacies or marriage-portions. Therefore on the death of the wife her marriage-portion will lapse.<sup>1</sup>

## XVII. ON LAPSES

1. A testamentary gift which the donee fails from any cause to take, although left to him in such manner that he could have taken it according to the civil law, is called a *lapse*, for it has in a way slipped from him; for instance, if a legacy be left to an unmarried man or to a Junian Latin, and the unmarried man do not within a hundred days conform to the *lex*, or the Latin do not obtain Roman citizenship; or if the heir appointed to a part, or if a legatee die or become a foreigner before the opening of the testament.<sup>2</sup> . . . 2. At the present day, in accordance with a constitution of the Emperor Antoninus, all lapses are claimed for the treasury: the ancient rule, however, being upheld for the benefit of descendants and ascendants.

3. Lapses carry with them their own burdens: and therefore gifts of freedom, legacies and *fideicommissa* charged upon him from whom the inheritance lapses, stand good, and of course legacies and *fideicommissa* also lapse subject to their burdens.

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<sup>1</sup> Mommsen says these two paragraphs have been retained through inadvertence by the abbreviator of Ulpian: for their provisions had been abolished by a law of Constantine; and the abbreviator in all other cases has struck out obsolete rules.

The marriage-portion, which in general went to the husband or father, went instead to the *fiscus*, if the marriage had been *impar*.

<sup>2</sup> No doubt Ulpian proceeded to state the provisions of the *Lex Julia et Papia Poppaea* as to lapses, but the abbreviator has struck out this passage.

## XVIII. WHO HAVE THE ANCIENT RIGHT IN LAPSES.

1. The Lex Papia Poppaea has further granted the ancient right to descendants and ascendants of the testator as far as the third degree. So that when these are instituted heirs anything which another person does not take under the testament belongs to them wholly or in part, according as it can belong. . . .

## XIX. ON DOMINUM AND ACQUISITIONS OF THINGS.

1. All things are either Mancipable or non-mancipable. The former are praedial property<sup>1</sup> on Italic soil, both rural, as a field, and urban, as a house; also rights belonging to rural praedial property, as *via*, *iter*, *actus*, *aquaeductus*: also slaves and those quadrupeds which are tamed by yoke and saddle, as oxen, mules, horses, asses. All other things are non-mancipable. Elephants and camels, although they may be tamed by yoke and saddle, are non-mancipable because they are in the category of wild beasts.<sup>2</sup>

2. We acquire ownership over individual things by mancipation, by tradition, by cession in court, by usucapion, by adjudication, and by operation of law.

3. Mancipation is the form of transfer peculiar to things mancipable: and it is transacted with a special phraseology, and in the presence of a balance-holder (*libripens*) and five witnesses. 4. The parties to a mancipation may be Roman citizens, Latin colonists, Junian Latins, or those foreigners to

<sup>1</sup> *Praedium* is anything attached to or connected with the land.

<sup>2</sup> The true reason why elephants and camels were classed with *res nec Mancipi* is given by Maine in his *Ancient Law*, viz. that these animals in all probability became known to the Romans after the list of *res Mancipi* had been settled. That list was formed in early times, and included all property likely to be important to a half-civilized community; and as writing was unknown, transfers were hedged about with formalities. When property became more extensive and more varied in character, what had originally been a protection became an inconvenience, and new articles of commerce were allowed to be alienated by simpler methods.



whom the privilege of *commercium* has been given. 5. *Commercium* is the reciprocal right of purchase and sale. 6. Moveable things can be mancipated only when produced before the parties, and then no more at one time than are able to be taken by the hand; but immoveable things can be mancipated several together as well as lying in different localities.

7. Tradition, in like manner, is the method of transfer appropriate to things non-mancipable. For we acquire the ownership of these things by the delivery itself, provided always that they have been delivered to us in consequence of a transaction recognised by the law. 8. By usucapion we obtain the ownership of things both mancipable and non-mancipable. Now usucapion is the acquisition of ownership through continuous possession for one or two years—one, where the things are moveable—two, where they are immoveable.

9. Cession in court also is a mode of transfer common to both classes of things. It is transacted by means of three parties, the cessor in court, the claimant and the adjudicant. 10. The owner is cessor, the transferee is claimant, and the Praetor is adjudicant. 11. Even incorporeal things can be transferred by cession, as for instance an usufruct, and an inheritance, and the statutable tutelage of a freed woman. 12. An inheritance is transferred by cession either before or after entry. 13. Before entry the transfer may be effected by a statutable heir; after entry both by a statutable heir, and by him who has been appointed heir in a testament. 14. If the inheritance have been transferred before entry, the transferee becomes heir just as if he himself had been the statutable heir; but if the transfer be made after entry, the transferor continues to be heir, and on this account remains bound to the creditors of the deceased; the debts, however, perish; in other words, the debtors of the deceased are set free; 15. But the corporeal things pass to the transferee of the inheritance just as if they had been separately transferred by cession.

16. By adjudication we obtain ownership by means of the formula "for severing an estate," which is applicable to co-heirs, by means also of the formula for dividing partnership

property, applicable to partners, and by means of the formula for setting out boundaries, applicable to neighbouring proprietors; for if a *judex* have adjudicated anything to one of several co-heirs, partners, or neighbours, acquisition thereof immediately accrues to him, whether the thing be mancipable or non-mancipable.

17. We acquire ownership by operation of law, as in the case of a lapse or an escheat by force of the Lex Papia Poppaea, and in that of a legacy by force of a Law of the Twelve Tables, whether the subject be a thing mancipable or a thing non-mancipable.

18. Ownership is also acquired for us by means of persons whom we have in our *potestas*, *manus* or *mancipium*. If then, for instance, such persons have received something by way of mancipation, or if something have been delivered to them by tradition, or if they have stipulated for something, that thing belongs to us; 19. So too if these persons have been instituted as heirs, or if a legacy have been left them, they acquire for us the inheritance upon entry therein by our direction, and the legacy belongs to us. 20. If a slave belong to one person by Bonitarian and to another by Quiritarian title, he acquires in all cases for his Bonitarian owner. 21. An individual whom we possess in good faith, whether he be a free man or a slave belonging to another, acquires for us in two cases only, viz. when his acquisition is the product of something belonging to us and when it is the product of his own labour. Acquisitions resulting from causes other than either belong to the man himself, if he be free, or to his owner, if he be the slave to another person (than his *bona fide* possessor). The same rules apply also to the case of a slave in whom we have only an usufruct. . . .

## XX. ON TESTAMENTS

1. A testament is the legal attestation of our intentions, made in solemn form for the express purpose of being carried out after our death. 2. There used to be three kinds of testaments; one which was made at the specially-summoned *comitia*, another which was made in battle-array, a third

which was called "by coin and balance." The two former having been abolished, the only one in use at the present day is that which is solemnized by coin and balance, that is, by means of an imaginary mancipation. And in this form of testament a balance-holder (*libripens*) is employed, also a purchaser of the estate (*familiae emptor*), and not less than five witnesses, with whom the testator can lawfully deal in testamentary matters. 3. He who is in the *potestas* of the testator or of the purchaser of the estate cannot be employed as a witness or as a balance-holder, since the mancipation of the estate is a transaction between the testator and the purchaser of the estate, and members of their households must not be employed as witnesses. 4. For this reason also where a *filius familias* is the purchaser of the estate, his father cannot be a witness.<sup>1</sup> 5. Of two brothers under the *potestas* of the same father, one cannot be the purchaser of the estate, and the other a witness, since that which one of them takes by the mancipation he acquires for his father, for whom his other son cannot be a witness. 6. But a father and a son under his *potestas*, as also two brothers under the *potestas* of the same father, may both of them be witnesses, or one may be a witness and the other the balance-holder, when some third party is the purchaser of the estate; for there is no harm in several witnesses from the same household being employed when the business affects a stranger. 7. A dumb person, a deaf person, a madman, a minor, or a woman cannot be made purchaser of the estate, or witness or balance-holder. 8. A Junian Latin can be made either purchaser of the estate, balance-holder or witness, inasmuch as testamentary dealing with him is legal.

9. In the form of testament by coin and balance two matters are transacted, the mancipation of the estate and the nuncupation of the testament. The testament is nuncupated after this manner: the testator holding the tablets of the testament says as follows—"These things as they are written in these tablets of wax, I so give, I so bequeath, I so claim

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<sup>1</sup> *Domesticus testis* is not only a son or slave, but any one amenable to coercion.

your evidence, and do you, Quirites, so grant it me." And this is called the nuncupation and attestation.

10. A *filius-familias* cannot make a testament inasmuch as he has nothing of his own, so as to be able to declare any intention regarding it. But the late emperor (Marcus)<sup>1</sup> by a Constitution enacted that a *filius-familias*, being a soldier, might make a testament affecting that portion of his *peculium* which he acquired whilst on service. 11. Where a man has become uncertain about his status (through ignorance, for example, that he is *sui juris* in consequence of his father having died abroad), he cannot make a testament. 12. A youth not of the age of puberty, though he chance to be *sui juris*, cannot make a testament, inasmuch as he is not yet endowed with full mental capacity. 13. A dumb person, a deaf person, a madman, and also a prodigal who is restrained by interdict from the management of his property, cannot make a testament. The dumb person because he cannot utter the nuncupatory formula, the deaf person because he cannot fully hear the words of the purchaser of the estate, the madman because he has not mental powers for making testamentary disposition as to the subject in hand, the prodigal because he has been laid under a general prohibition as to legal transactions,<sup>2</sup> and on that account cannot mancipate his estate.

14. A Junian Latin, as also a person classed among the *dediticii*, cannot make a testament: the Latin because he is specially prohibited by the Lex Junia: and he who is classed among the *dediticii* because he can neither make testamentary disposition as a Roman citizen, seeing that he is a foreigner, nor as a foreigner, seeing that he is a citizen of no ascertained state, so as to be able to make his testament in accordance with the laws of his state. 15. Women after their twelfth year can make testaments, with the authorization of their tutors, as long as they are under tutelage. 16. A public

<sup>1</sup> Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

<sup>2</sup> *Commercium* was the right of being a party in those transactions, such as *mancipatio*, *cessio in jure*, etc., which were peculiar to the *jus civile*. The prodigal was interdicted from these because he was under a wider disqualification, viz. *de bonis suis*, which debarred him from all dealings equitable as well as legal.

slave of the Roman people has the right of making a testament as to half his *peculium*.

## XXI. HOW AN HEIR OUGHT TO BE INSTITUTED

1. An heir can be properly instituted by the following phraseology:—"Titius, be thou heir;" "Let Titius be heir;" "I order Titius to be heir." But an institution running thus: "I institute as heir," or "I make heir," has been generally disapproved. . . .

## XXII. WHO CAN BE INSTITUTED HEIRS

1. Those can be instituted heirs who have testamentary capacity relatively to the testator. 2. One who is classed among the *dediticii* cannot be instituted heir, because he is a foreigner, for whose benefit a testament cannot be made. 3. A Junian Latin can be instituted heir; and can take up the inheritance, provided he be a Roman citizen at the time of the testator's death, or within the period for cretion; but if he have continued to be a Latin, he is prohibited from taking the inheritance by the Lex Junia. The same rule is applied to an unmarried person by reason of the Lex Julia. 4. An uncertain person cannot be instituted heir, as for instance in this way: "Whoever shall first come to my funeral, let him be my heir;"<sup>1</sup> for a testator's intention ought to be clear. 5. Neither a municipal corporation nor its members can be instituted heirs, because the body is an uncertain one, and can neither collectively make a cretion nor act in the character of heirs, so as to become heirs: but by a *senatus-consultum* it has been conceded that they can be instituted heirs by their own freedmen. An inheritance, however, that has been left by way of *fidei-commissum* can be delivered over to the members of a municipal corporation; in fact, this is laid down by the same *senatus-consultum*. 6. We cannot institute the gods as heirs, save those whose institution has been permitted by *senatus-consulta* or by imperial constitu-

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<sup>1</sup> This rule applies to legacies also.



tions, as Tarpeian Jove, Didymaeon Apollo of Miletus, Mars in Gaul, Minerva of Ilium, Hercules of Gades, Diana of Ephesus, the Sipylonian mother of the gods, worshipped at Smyrna, and Selene Coelestis, the goddess of Carthage.

7. We can institute slaves as heirs; with a gift of liberty, if they belong to us; without a gift of liberty, if they are owned by other people; with or without a gift of liberty, if they are owned in common by ourselves and others. 8. A slave who is ours by Bonitary title alone we cannot institute heir even with a gift of liberty, because (by the gift of liberty) he attains the Latin status, and this is not available for the purpose of taking an inheritance. 9. Slaves belonging to other people we can only institute heirs when we have testamentary capacity in reference to their masters. 10. A slave who is the common property of ourselves and others is duly instituted heir with a gift of liberty, inasmuch as he is ours so far as our own share in him is concerned; and without a gift of liberty, inasmuch as he is another's property so far as our partner's share in him is concerned.<sup>1</sup> 11. Our own slave when instituted heir with a gift of liberty, becomes free and heir under the testament, *i.e.*, "necessary" heir, provided only he continue in the same condition; 12. but if he be manumitted or alienated by the testator himself during his lifetime, he can enter upon the inheritance of his own accord or by order of his purchaser. If, however, he be instituted without a gift of liberty, the institution is altogether ineffectual.<sup>2</sup> 13. Where a slave who is owned by some other person has been instituted heir, in the event of his continuing in the same condition he ought to enter upon the inheritance by his master's orders; but if he be manumitted or alienated by his master during the testator's lifetime he will be able to enter upon the inheritance either of his own accord by order of his purchaser.

<sup>1</sup> Cujacius in his commentary *ad loc.* says: "If he is instituted with a gift of liberty, he becomes the sole property of the other partner (1. 18), and therefore the whole inheritance goes to that partner: if without a gift of liberty, the inheritance is divided between the partner and the heir of the testator."

<sup>2</sup> But Justinian ruled otherwise. See *Inst.* II. 14. pr.

14. *Sui heredes* must be either instituted heirs or disinherited. Now *sui heredes* are the descendants whom we have under our *potestas*, whether natural or adopted; also a wife who is under *manus*, and a daughter-in-law who is under the *manus* of a son who is himself under *potestas*. 15. After-born descendants too, that is, those still in the womb,<sup>1</sup> if they be such as would have been under our *potestas* if born, are classed among *sui heredes*. 16. The fact of one of the *sui heredes* being a son neither instituted heir nor disinherited by name, prevents the testament from being valid. 17. If other classes of descendants, a daughter for instance or a grandson, or a granddaughter, be passed over, the testament is valid, but they attach themselves therein to the appointed heirs;<sup>2</sup> to *sui heredes*, for a proportional portion, to extraneous heirs for one-half the estate. 18. Any after-born descendants of either sex, if not named, by their after birth make void a testament which otherwise was valid. 19. Those who are in the womb we can institute as heirs, supposing they would have been *sui heredes* to us in case they had been born; by virtue of the civil law, if their birth take place after our death; but if in our lifetime, by virtue of the Lex Junia.

20. If a son who is under *potestas* be not instituted heir he ought to be disinherited by name; all other *sui heredes* of either sex may be disinherited either by name or in a general clause. 21. An after-born son must be disinherited by name, an after-born daughter and other after-born female descendants either by name, or in a general clause, provided, however, that some legacy be left to those who are disinherited in a general clause.<sup>3</sup> 22. Grandsons and great-grandsons and other after-born males, except a son, must be disinherited either by name or in a general clause with the addition of

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<sup>1</sup> Sc. at the time the testament is made.

<sup>2</sup> "These omitted persons do not become heirs in opposition to the testament, but become heirs *ex testamento* as though tacitly instituted therein." Huschke.

<sup>3</sup> Gaius insists on a male *postumus* being disinherited by name, and does not agree with Ulpian, that, unless he be a son, he may be disinherited *inter caeteros* with a legacy.

a legacy; it is, however, safer that they be disinherited by name, and that is the more usual practice.

23. As to emancipated children of either sex, although by the civil law it is not necessary either to institute them heirs or to disinherit them, yet the Praetor orders that unless they be instituted as heirs they shall be disinherited, if males by name, but if females (either by name) or in general clause, otherwise he promises them possession of the goods as against the testament.

24. Between *heredes necessarii*, that is, slaves appointed as heirs with a gift of liberty, and *heredes sui et necessarii*, that is, descendants under *potestas*, there is no distinction according to the civil law, for both these classes are heirs even against their will; but by the Praetorian law the privilege is accorded to *heredes sui et necessarii* of renouncing their ancestor's inheritance, whilst to *heredes necessarii* alone this privilege is not accorded.<sup>1</sup>

25. If an extraneous heir have been instituted "with cretion," he becomes heir by the act of cretion: but if he have been instituted "without cretion" he becomes heir by acting as heir. 26. A man acts as heir who makes use of the effects belonging to the inheritance as though owner, as for instance where he puts up the effects to auction, or gives provisions to the slaves belonging to the inheritance. 27. "Cretion" is a space of certain days which is given to the instituted heir for the purpose of deliberating whether it be advisable for him to enter upon the inheritance or not: as for instance (in the following direction): "Titius, be thou heir and make thy cretion within the next one hundred days after thou hast knowledge and ability, but if thou dost not so make thy cretion, be disinherited." 28. To make cretion is to utter the words of cretion in this way: "Since Maevius has instituted me heir, I enter upon that inheritance and make my cretion for it." 29. If he who has been instituted heir without cretion, have declared that he will not be heir, he is forth-

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<sup>1</sup> *Heredes necessarii* had however the *beneficium separationis*, which enabled them to deduct any acquisitions they had made since the testator's death.

with excluded from the inheritance, and has no further opportunity of entering upon it. 30. But in like manner as he who is instituted heir with cretion becomes heir by the act of cretion, so he is not excluded within the period limited; and therefore although he may have decided that he will not be heir, yet if any portion of the limited period remains, by repenting this act and by making cretion he can become heir.

31. Cretion is styled either common or continuous: common cretion being the one in which these words are added, "after thou hast knowledge and ability;" continuous, the one in which they are not added. 32. Against him who has the common cretion those days only are reckoned during which he knew that he was instituted heir and was able to decide, whilst against him who has continuous cretion those days also are reckoned during which he was unaware of having been instituted heir, or did know it but could not decide.

33. Heirs are said to be either instituted or substituted. Those are instituted who have been inscribed heirs in the first degree, those are substituted who are inscribed in the second or following degrees, thus: "Titius, be thou heir, and decide within the next one hundred days after thou shalt have knowledge and ability, but unless thou shalt so decide be disinherited. In that case, Maevius, be thou my heir, and decide within the next one hundred days, etc." And so in similar terms can successive substitutions be made.

34. If an heir have been instituted under an imperfect cretion, that is, without the addition of the words: "If thou dost not decide, be disinherited," but only in this form: "If thou dost not decide, then, Maevius, be thou heir," by the act of deciding the first heir excludes the one after him, whilst by not deciding, but by acting as heir, the first heir admits the substituted heir into a half of the inheritance. The Emperor Marcus, however, afterwards enacted by a Constitution, that even by acting as heir the first-named person becomes heir to the whole. But if he have neither decided nor acted as heir, he is excluded, and the substitute becomes heir to the whole inheritance.

## XXIII. HOW TESTAMENTS ARE BROKEN

1. A testament, though made in proper legal form, is invalidated in two ways, if it be broken, or if it be rendered ineffectual.

2. A testament is broken by a change, that is, if another testament have been afterwards made in proper legal form. So too it is broken by agnation, that is, when a *suus heres* is agnated who has been neither instituted heir nor disinherited in the form prescribed. 3. A *suus heres* is agnated either by after-birth, or by adoption, or by coming under *manus*, or by succeeding to the position of a *suus heres*, as a grandson does to that of a deceased or emancipated son, or by manumission, that is, if a son who has been manumitted after a first or second mancipation has reverted to his father's *potestas*.

4. A testament is made ineffectual where a testator has suffered *capitis diminutio*, or where there is no surviving heir under a testament legally made.

5. When a person who has made a testament has been captured by the enemy, his testament is valid; if he return, by virtue of the rule of postliminy; but if he die, by the Lex Cornelia, which confirms his succession in like manner as if he had died in the state.

6. If a testament have been sealed, with the seals of seven witnesses, though it may have become broken or ineffectual according to the civil law, yet the Praetor gives possession of the goods in accordance with the testator's directions to the appointed heirs, provided the testator was a Roman citizen and *sui juris* at the time of his death; and this possession such heirs take '*cum re*,' that is effectually, provided there be no one else legally heir.

7. To descendants who are under the age of puberty and still subject to *potestas*, whether they be born or after-born, their ascendants can substitute heirs in two ways, viz. either in the form prescribed for making a substituted heir to extraneous heirs, so that if the descendants do not become heirs the substitute shall become heir; or in a special manner, so that the substitute shall become heir in case those who



have been made heirs should die under the age of puberty and after their ascendants' death. 8. Ascendants are allowed to make substitutions even to disinherited children. 9. A person cannot substitute anybody as heir to a son under years of puberty except he have previously instituted as heir to himself either that son or some other one else.

10. In whatever manner soldiers may have made their testaments, they are valid, that is, even without any legal form. For by certain Imperial Constitutions they have been privileged to declare their intentions as they will and as they can. But where a soldier has made a testament contrary to the rule of law, it is only valid if he have died either on service or within a year after his discharge.

#### XXIV. ON LEGACIES

1. A legacy is that which is left by testament in legal form, that is, imperatively. For those bequests which are made precatively are called *fideicommissa*.

2. Now we make legacies in four ways: by *vindicatio*, by *damnatio*, '*sinendi modo*,' by *praeceptio*. 3. We give a legacy by vindication in these words: "I give and bequeath," "acquire," "take," "have for himself;" 4. by damnation in these words: "Let my heir be bound to give," "give," "do," "I order my heir to give;" 5. by form of sufferance thus: "Let my heir be bound to suffer Lucius Titius to take that thing and to have it for himself;" 6. by praeception, thus: "Let Lucius Titius first take that thing."

7. By vindication those things can be left in legacy which were the testator's property in Quiritary right at both times, *i. e.* at the time of his death and at the time when he made his testament, unless they are dependent on weight, number or measure; for as to these it is sufficient if they were the testator's property in Quiritary right at the time of his death only. 8. All things can be left by damnation, even those which are not the testator's, provided, however, they are such as can be given. 9. A free man, or anything belonging to the *populus*, or a thing that is sacred, or religious, cannot be legaced even by damnation, because it cannot be given.

10. By form of sufferance things belonging to the testator himself or his heir can be legacied. 11. Anything capable of being legacied by vindication can be legacied also by praeception.

11a. Where a thing that was not the testator's property by Quiritary title at both (the above-mentioned) times has been left by vindication, though by the civil law the legacy is not valid, yet it is upheld by the *senatus-consultum Neronianum*; in which it was enacted that when a legacy is made by inapt words it shall be the same as if it had been made in the most advantageous form, and the most advantageous form of legacy is that by damnation.

12. Where the same thing has been left to two persons by vindication, whether jointly, as "I give and bequeath to Titius and Seius my slave Stichus," or severally, as for instance, "I give and bequeath to Titius my slave Stichus, I give and bequeath the same slave to Seius;" half goes to each, if they join in accepting; but in the case of one not accepting, his part used to accrue to the other according to the civil law: but since the passing the *lex Papia Poppaea*, the share of him who does not take becomes a lapse. 13. Where the same thing has been left by damnation to two persons, if it be jointly, then half is due to each (and the share of the one who did not take used to remain the inheritance according to the civil law, but now becomes a lapse); but if it be severally, then the whole is due them individually.

14. In the case of an optional legacy being given by way of vindication, for instance in the words: "Titius, do thou choose or select a slave," the selection is with the legatee; and the rule is also the same if the option be given tacitly, in this form: "I give and bequeath a slave to Titius." But if it be by way of damnation, for instance, "Let my heir be bound to give a slave to Titius," the heir has a right to elect what slave he will give.

15. No legacy can be inserted before the institution of the heir, since the whole force and power of a testament start from the institution of the heir. 16. Also no legacy can be left (to take effect) after the heir's death, for fear that there be an appearance of a legacy being made chargeable on the

heir of the heir, which the principles of the civil law do not allow. But a legacy can be left (to take effect) at the time of the heir's death, as in this form: "When the heir shall be dying."

17. A legacy cannot be left by way of penalty; and a legacy is by way of penalty when something is left for the purpose of constraining the heir to do or not to do an act, and not for the purpose of giving something to the legatee,<sup>1</sup> as for instance in this way: "If thou bestow thy daughter in marriage on Titius, give 10,000 sesterces to Seius."

18. A legacy cannot be left to an uncertain person; for instance, thus: "Whosoever shall have bestowed his daughter in marriage on my son, do thou, my heir, give him so many thousand sesterces." A legacy can however be left to an uncertain person under a definite description, for instance thus: "Do thou, my heir, give such and such a thing to him of my relations now existing who shall first come to my funeral."

19. A legacy is not rendered ineffectual either by a false description or by a false consideration. A false description is such as this: "The estate which I bought of Titius I give and bequeath to Titius," when in fact the estate was not bought of Titius. A false consideration is as follows: "I give and bequeath to Titius that estate, in consideration of his having managed my business," whereas Titius never had managed the testator's business.

20. A legacy cannot be charged upon a legatee. 21. A legacy can only be charged upon the person who has been appointed heir in a testament; and therefore if a *filius-familias* or a slave be instituted heir, a legacy cannot be charged upon his father or his master.<sup>2</sup> 22. A legacy cannot be left to the

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<sup>1</sup> This rule, as well as those in the two preceding paragraphs, Justinian abolished; although he retained the rule that heirs could not be charged with a penalty on non-performance of an impossible, immoral or illegal act.

<sup>2</sup> Sc. it cannot be charged upon them, although they get the inheritance by consenting to the son's or slave's acceptance. That this is the meaning is plain from a strikingly analogous dictum in D. 28. 6. 8. 1.

heir, charged upon himself.<sup>1</sup> 23. A legacy can be left conditionally to a person who is under the *potestas*, *manus* or *mancipium* of the appointed heir; so that the question to be asked will be whether he is not under the *potestas* of the heir at the time of vesting of the legacy. 24. A legacy can be left even without condition to a person in whose *potestas*, *manus* or *mancipium* the appointed heir is; but if he become heir through his means he cannot take the legacy.

25. Just as separate things can be legacied so can an aggregate of things, that is to say a share, which species of legacy is called a "partition;" as for instance in this way: "Let my heir share and divide my inheritance with Titius;" in which case half the property is regarded as legacied to Titius; but of course other shares can be legacied, as a third or a fourth.

26. By the civil law a legacy can be left of the usufruct of any things which admit of their usufruct being enjoyed without injury to their substance; and this usufruct may either be of separate things or of several things together. 27. By a *senatus-consultum* it was provided that even though the usufruct legacied be that of things valuable for consumption only, as for example wine, oil, corn, the things are to be delivered to the legatee, but security must be provided for their restitution when the usufruct shall cease to belong to the legatee.

28. A legacy can be left to any of the civic communities which exist under the sway of the Roman people;<sup>2</sup> a privilege which was introduced by the late emperor Nerva, and was afterwards more definitely established by the senate at the instance of Hadrian.

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<sup>1</sup> An example of the application of this rule is given in D. 30. 1. 116. 1. *A* and *B* are coheirs of an estate in equal portions, and a specific field is given as a legacy to *B*, *C* and *D*: *B*'s share of that field will be one-sixth, *C*'s or *D*'s five-twelvths. For *B*, *C*, *D* conjoin in dividing the moiety of the field which appertained to *A* as heir: *C* and *D* alone divide; for *B* cannot have a legacy charged upon himself, and so as to that moiety the legacy is to *C* and *D* only.

<sup>2</sup> Though an inheritance cannot, xxii. 5.

29. A legacy when given can be adeemed either by the same testament, or by codicils confirmed by the testament, provided, however, that the mode of its ademption be the same as of its bequest.

30. Legacies do not pass to the heir of the legatee except the death of the legatee take place after the vesting of the legacies. 31. The vesting of legacies left unconditionally, or (to be retained) until a certain day, dated from the death of the testator under the old jurisprudence; but by the Lex Papia Poppaea from the opening of the tablets of the testament; where, however, the legacies are left conditionally, the vesting dates from the time of the fulfilment of the condition.

32. The Lex Falcidia forbids more than three-fourths of an inheritance to be expended in legacies, so that a clear fourth may always remain with the heir.

33. There is no right of recovering legacies wrongly paid.

#### XXV. ON FIDEICOMMISSA.

1. A *fideicommissum* is a devise expressed not in strict legal phraseology but by way of request; and does not take effect by force of the Civil Law, but is given in compliance with the wish of the person leaving it. 2. The phraseology of *fideicommissa* generally employed is such as this: "I commit to your good faith, I ask, I wish to be given," and so forth. 3. It has been established by usage that a *fideicommissum* can be given even by a nod. 4. Those who can make a testament, although they have not made one, can leave a *fideicommissum*: for even a man about to die intestate can leave a *fideicommissum*. 5. Those things can be left by *fideicommissum* which can also be left as legacies "by damnation." 6. *Fideicommissa* can be given to the same persons to whom legacies can be left. 7. Junian Latins can take a *fideicommissum*, though they cannot take a legacy. 8. A *fideicommissum* can be given both before the institution of the heir and (to take effect) after the death of the heir, and also by codicils unconfirmed in a testament; though legacies cannot be left in this way. 9. Again a *fideicommissum* written in Greek is valid, though a legacy written in Greek is



not. 10. If the son of a legatee under his *potestas*, or his slave be appointed heir, or if a legacy be left to them, a *fideicommissum* can be charged upon the father or owner although a legacy cannot be so charged. 11. A person who has been instituted as testamentary heir can be requested by codicils, though unconfirmed, to restore the inheritance either wholly or in part to another, although an heir cannot be instituted directly even by confirmed codicils. 12. The process for recovering *fideicommissa* is not, like that for legacies, by *formula*, but at Rome falls under the jurisdiction of the Consuls or of the Praetor called Fideicommissary Praetor; in the provinces under that of their presidents. 13. Not even *fideicommissa* can be given by way of penalty, or to a foreigner or to an uncertain person.

14. Where a person has been requested to hand over the inheritance to another, supposing the Lex Falcidia be not in question, because he has not been asked to hand over more than three-fourths, he hands it over under the *senatusconsultum Trebellianum*, so that all actions are granted for and against him to whom the inheritance has been handed over. But supposing that the Lex Falcidia does apply, in consequence of his having been requested to hand over more than three-fourths or even the whole of the inheritance, then he hands it over under the *senatusconsultum Pegasianum*, so that, after the deduction of the fourth, all actions are maintained for and against him who has been appointed heir: whilst he who receives the inheritance is regarded as being in the position of legatee. 15. If the inheritance have been handed over under the *senatusconsultum Pegasianum*, the method whereby the advantages and disadvantages of the inheritance are shared between the heir and the person to whom the residue has been handed over, is by stipulations being entered into after the model of the stipulations "of and for a part." Now those stipulations are properly called "of and for a part" which are usually entered into, for the object of dividing the gain and loss, between the heir and a partiary legatee,<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* a person with whom the heir is ordered

<sup>1</sup> For *partitio*, see xxiv. 25, above.

to share the inheritance. 16. If the heir declare the inheritance to be ruinous, he is compelled by the Praetor to enter upon it and hand over the whole, so that all actions may be granted for and against the person receiving the inheritance, just as though it had been handed over under the *senatusconsultum Trebellianum*, and provisions to this effect have been enacted by the *senatusconsultum Pegasianum*.

17. If any one have fraudulently given a secret promise to hand over a *fideicommissum* to a person incapable of taking it, the senate has ruled that he can neither deduct a quarter, nor claim a lapse under that testament, supposing that he has children.<sup>1</sup>

18. Liberty can be given by means of a *fideicommissum*.

## XXVI. ON STATUTABLE HEIRS

1. The inheritances of intestate free-born persons belong first to their *sui heredes*, that is, their descendants under their *potestas* and all other persons in the position of descendants; then, if there be no *sui heredes*, to the *consanguinei*, that is, brothers and sisters begotten of the same father: then, failing these also, to the other agnates of nearest degree, that is, relations of the male sex, tracing their descent through males and of the same family; for this was enacted by a law of the Twelve Tables in the following words: "If any one die intestate without any *suus heres*, then let the nearest agnate have the estate."

2. If the deceased leave one son and also one grandson, or even more, born of another son deceased, the inheritance belongs to them all, not in such manner as to be divided *per capita*, but *per stirpes*, that is, that the surviving son have one half share and the grandsons, however many, have the other half: for it is fair that the grandsons should succeed to their father's place and have that share which their father would have, were he living.

3. So long as there is any expectation of a *suus heres* possibly becoming heir, there is no place for the agnates, as

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<sup>1</sup> This regulation was made by Antoninus.

where the wife of the deceased is pregnant, or his son is in the enemy's hands.

4. The inheritances of agnates are divided *per capita*; for instance, if there be a brother's son and two or more children of another brother, whatever be the number of persons in the two branches taken together, the inheritance is divided into that number of portions, so that each person may take one. 5. If there be several agnates in the same degree, supposing some of them to be unwilling that the inheritance should belong to them, or to have died before their entry upon it, their share accrues to those who have entered; but if none have done so, the inheritance is not in law transmissible to the next degree, because there is no representation among statutable heirs. 6. A statutable inheritance does not belong to women beyond the degree of *consanguineae*, therefore a sister becomes statutable heir to her brother or sister, but a father's sister or a brother's daughter, etc., does not become statutable heir. 7. According to the law of the Twelve Tables the inheritance of an intestate mother did not belong to her descendants, unless the marriage had been with *conventio in manum*, because women have no *sui heredes*; but at a later period the rule was made by an oration of the Emperors Antoninus and Commodus delivered in the senate, that the statutable inheritances of mothers should belong to their sons, to the exclusion of the *consanguinei* and the other agnates. 8. The inheritance of an intestate son does not belong to his mother by virtue of any law of the Twelve Tables; but if she have the prerogative of children, which in the case of a free-born woman is acquired by three, in that of a freed-woman by four, then she is made statutable heir by virtue of the *senatusconsultum Tertullianum*; provided only that her son have neither a *suus heres* nor any one who is called by the Praetor amongst the *sui heredes* to the possession of the goods, nor a father to whom in law the inheritance or the possession of the goods belongs effectively, nor a brother by the father's side; but if he have a sister by the father's side, then the inheritance is directed to belong to both (*viz.* the mother and this sister).

## XXVII. ON THE SUCCESSIONS (OR GOODS) OF FREEDMEN

1. The inheritance of intestate freedmen belongs first to their *sui heredes*; then to those whose freedmen they are, such as their patron or patroness, or their patron's descendants. 2. Should there be a patron and the son of another patron, the inheritance belongs to the patron alone. 3. The son of a patron again is preferred to the grandsons of a patron. 4. The inheritance of the deceased (freedman) on going to the descendants of the patron is divisible *per capita* and not *per stirpes*.

5. The right of statutable inheritance originating from the law of the Twelve Tables is lost by *capitis diminutio*.<sup>1</sup>

## XXVIII. ON GIVING POSSESSIONS

1. Possession of goods is granted either in opposition to, or in accordance with the testamentary directions, or upon an intestacy.

2. *Bonorum possessio* in opposition to the testament is given to descendants, even if emancipated, who have been passed over in the testament, though by statutable rules the inheritance does not belong to the latter. 3. *Bonorum possessio* in opposition to the testamentary dispositions is given to descendants both actual and adopted: and to actual descendants even when emancipated, though not also to those who are in an adopted family; but to those adopted children alone who have remained in the *potestas* (of the adopter). 4. The *Bonorum possessio* is granted to emancipated descendants by virtue of the Edict, if they are prepared to give security to their brothers who have continued under *potestas*, that they will bring into the division the property they had at the death of their father.

5. *Bonorum possessio* in accordance with the testamentary dispositions is granted to the appointed heirs, provided there be no one to whom possession belongs in opposition to the dispositions, or provided none of these wish to claim it.

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<sup>1</sup> The other statutable inheritances followed the same rule.



6. And further if a testament be invalid according to the Civil Law, because, perhaps, the mancipation of the estate, or the nuncupation was wanting, still *bonorum possessio* is granted if the testament have been sealed with the seals of not less than seven witnesses, Roman citizens.

7. *Bonorum possessio* upon an intestacy is granted through seven degrees:<sup>1</sup> in the first degree to descendants; in the second to statutable heirs; in the third to the nearest relations; in the fourth to the family of the patron; in the fifth to the patron or patroness, and to the descendants or ascendants of the patron or patroness; in the sixth to the husband or wife; in the seventh to the relations of the manumittor, who are allowed by the Lex Furia to take more than one thousand *asses*; and if there be no one, to whom the *bonorum possessio* can belong, or if there be such an one, but he have abandoned his right, the property devolves upon the *populus* by virtue of the Lex Julia concerning lapses. 8. The *bonorum possessio* "to descendants" is conferred both upon those who remained under *potestas* up to the time of the ascendant's death, and upon those who have been emancipated; likewise upon those received in adoption, but not upon those given in adoption. 9. Not only do those persons receive the *bonorum possessio* "as nearest relation," who are related through a person of the female sex, but also such agnates as have undergone a *capitis diminutio*: for although by the *capitis diminutio* they have lost the statutable right of agnation, they still remain relations by nature.

10. *Bonorum possessio* is granted to the ascendants and descendants within one year from the time when they became able to make their claims; to all other persons within one hundred days. 11. And when any of these classes have not made their claim within this fixed time, the next degree is admitted, just as if those preceding were non-existent, and this is the case throughout the seven degrees.

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<sup>1</sup> The first, second, third, and sixth degrees of intestate succession here named, form the subject of separate titles of the Digest, viz, 38. 6, 38. 7, 38. 8, 38. 11. The other degrees were rendered superfluous by Justinian's new regulations regarding patronage.



12. Those to whom *bonorum possessio* is granted by virtue of the successory edict are not indeed heirs, but are by the Praetor's grant placed in the position of heirs; and therefore whether they are themselves suing or are being sued, fictitious actions must be employed in which they are feigned to be heirs.

13. The grant of *bonorum possessio* is made either "with benefit" or "without benefit." With benefit, when the recipient receives effectively, so that he can retain the property; without benefit, when some one else can by help of the Civil Law wrest the inheritance from him. For instance, if there be an heir appointed in a testament, the *bonorum possessio* on intestacy is "without benefit," because this appointed heir can by his statutable right wrest the inheritance from the *bonorum possessor*.

#### XXIX. ON THE PROPERTY OF FREEDMEN

1. A law of the Twelve Tables confers the inheritance of a Roman citizen freedman upon the patron, where the freedman has died intestate without leaving a *suus heres*: and therefore if he either die after making a testament, although leaving no *suus heres*, or die intestate, and leave a *suus heres*, even one not connected by birth, but a wife, for instance, who has been under his *manus*, or an adopted son, the law above-mentioned grants nothing to the patron. But by virtue of the Praetor's edict if, on the one hand, the freedman die testate, bequeathing nothing or less than half to his patron, possession of one half of the goods is granted to the patron in spite of the testamentary directions, unless the freedman leave as his successor some one of his actual descendants; and if, on the other hand, he die intestate and leave, say, a wife under *manus*, or an adopted son, possession of one half of the goods is in the same way granted to the patron to the detriment of the *sui heredes*. 2. No rights over the goods of a freedwoman are bestowed upon a patron by the Edict; therefore if, on the one hand, she die testate, the patron has no rights beyond those given him in the testament, which he as guardian authorized; and if, on the other

hand, she die intestate, the inheritance always belongs to him, although she may have descendants, for these, not being *sui heredes* to their mother, do not stand in the patron's way.

3. The Lex Papia Poppaea afterwards exempted freedwomen from the tutelage of patrons, by prerogative of four children, and having established the rule that they could thenceforth make testaments without the patron's authorization, it provided that a proportionate share of the freedwoman's property should be due to the patron, dependent on the number of her surviving children. 4. The male descendants of a patron have the same rights over the goods of the freedmen of their ascendants as the patron himself has. 5. Under the law of the Twelve Tables female descendants have just as much right as male descendants of patrons, but *bonorum possessio* does not appertain to them either in opposition to the testamentary directions of a freedman, or on his intestacy as against those *sui heredes* who are not such by blood; yet if they have obtained the prerogative of three children, they acquire these rights also by virtue of the Lex Papia Poppaea.

6. Patronesses used to have only such rights over their freedmen's property as the law of the Twelve Tables established; the Lex Papia Poppaea, however, afterwards gave to a patroness of free-birth enjoying the privilege of two children, and to a freedwoman enjoying that of three, the same rights that the patron has under the Edict.<sup>1</sup> 7. So too, the same *lex* gave to a woman of free-birth enjoying the privilege of three children all the rights which it conferred upon the patron himself.

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<sup>1</sup> Gaius says that the Lex Papia Poppaea did not give to a free-born patroness having two children or to a freedwoman patroness having three children the full rights of a patron, but *eadem fere jura*, allowing the complete rights only to a free-born patroness having three, or a freedwoman patroness having four children. This agrees with Ulpian's statement that the one class had only the rights under the Edict, the other the rights under the Lex Papia Poppaea.

## APPENDIX

### EARLY ROMAN INSTITUTIONS—THE TWELVE TABLES

BY W. A. HUNTER, M.A., LL.D.

#### EARLY ROMAN INSTITUTIONS

AFTER the expulsion of the kings (B.C. 509) the sovereign power of the Roman state was vested in the *comitia centuriata*, The Assembly of the Centuries. It elected the chief magistrates (and, indirectly through them, the senate); it passed the laws; it decided questions of peace and war, and it formed a court of final appeal in capital cases. The *comitia centuriata* embraced the whole body of the citizens, plebeian as well as patrician, each voting according to his census; but, in spite of the appearance of political equality, the power lay really with the patricians. For measures submitted to the *comitia centuriata* during the next century and a half could not pass into law without patrician or senatorial sanction.

In place of the king there were now elected by the *comitia centuriata* two chief magistrates. Down to B.C. 449 these were called *prætores* ("leaders"); after that *consules* ("colleagues"). Naturally, at first, they were of patrician rank. Indeed, it was not until B.C. 366 that a plebeian was elected to this office. As security against a return to regal and tyrannical government these prætors or consuls held office only for one year, and, although each possessed supreme power, neither could act alone in opposition to the will of his colleague. Their powers were the powers of the kings, more or less modified; but, as time went on, many of the original functions of the consuls were distributed to other officials, and curtailed by the rising influence of the plebeians.

The priestly functions of the king were at once transferred to a special officer, the *rex sacrorum*, or *rex sacrificulus*, in whose nomination the consuls had no voice, and who was ex-

cluded from all political offices, and officially subordinated to the *pontifex maximus*, or high priest, an office retained from the monarchy. This relegation, however, was no loss of power to the chief magistrates, who were always able to bend religion to what they considered to be the true service of the state.

The consuls were invested with supreme military power.

As civil heads of the state they convoked the senate and *comitia centuriata*, conducted the business of their meetings, and directed the executive administration.

In international business the consuls represented the state, but all their agreements required the sanction of the senate.

As judges, the consuls administered justice, both in civil and in criminal cases, to patricians and plebeians equally, either in person or through delegates. But in capital cases, while plebeians were tried by the consuls, patricians were tried before the *comitia centuriata*; the plebeians, however, had the right of appeal from the judgment of the consuls and, at a later time, the tribunes might interpose on their behalf.

The charge of the state-chest and of the state-archives devolved on the *quæstores*, quæstors, who now became regular annual magistrates. Later, the office of *prætor* was established, to which the judicial functions of the consuls were delegated. The establishment of the office of *censor* relieved the consuls of other functions.

In connection with their own official business, the consuls issued proclamations, or orders (*edicta*), which were recognised as valid during their term of office. These edicts were often retained, with modifications, by succeeding consuls, and this led to a rapid development of law as an organic system.

The senate remained for a long time a purely patrician body; a whole century had elapsed after the foundation of the republic before we find a single plebeian in this assembly. It had no independent legislative or executive power, but was simply an administrative council appointed, convened, and presided over by the consuls. "Yet," says Ihne in his *Roman History*, "owing to the annual change of consuls, and the great influence which the senate, as a permanent body, exercised on the election of consuls, the practical result was, that, in all essen-



tial and important questions, the senate decided the policy which the consuls had no alternative but to adopt."

In usual course, the consul laid a proposition before the senate, which, after discussion, adopted a resolution (*senatus-consultum*) on the subject. This the consul laid before the *comitia centuriata*. If approved by these representatives of the people, it returned to the senate, whose confirmation (*patrum auctoritas*) gave it the force of law.

In 508 B.C., the year following the establishment of the republic, the consul P. Valerius Publicola secured the enactment of certain important laws suggested by the circumstances of the revolution. One devoted to the infernal gods the person and property of anyone who should attempt to obtain royal power. Another secured to every citizen the right of appeal to the *comitia centuriata* from a sentence of death or scourging pronounced by a magistrate (that is, in the first instance, a consul). This Valerian law of appeal has been called the Roman Habeas Corpus Act. This law, however, did not apply to strangers or to slaves; it did not interfere with the power of the house-father; and it did not operate beyond a mile from the city.

About B.C. 494 the plebeians wrung from the patricians the right of legal protection through two special plebeian officers called Tribunes of the Plebeians. In B.C. 471 the number of tribunes was increased to five, and in B.C. 457 to ten. From B.C. 471 they were elected in accordance with the *lex Publilia* by the *comitia tributa*, Assembly of the Tribes, a popular assembly which, originally open to patricians as well as plebeians, had been ignored by the patricians, who were now (B.C. 471) definitely excluded. From this time on it passed resolutions upon other than local questions, which, while not of legal effect, had great moral force as expressing the will of the populace.

The tribunes had no military or other secular means of enforcing their orders, except the services of a single messenger (*viator*). But the office and person of the tribune were guarded by the strongest sanctions of religion. Originally the sole function of the tribunes was to protect plebeians from injustice. This they accomplished by pronouncing the word



*Veto*, "I forbid." To this veto even the consul had to submit. However, any one tribune might veto the order of a fellow tribune.

The tribunes at first were only privileged to watch the proceedings of the senate, sitting on benches outside the door of the senate-house; later they found entrance and liberty to address the house.

The doors of the tribunes' houses stood open day and night, to afford unimpeded access to plebeians requiring their aid. Their power ceased at the first milestone from the city.

At the same time as the tribunes were first elected two *ædiles* were appointed as their assistants, bearing a similar relation to them to that borne to the consuls by the *quæstors*. They had charge of the resolutions of the *comitia tributa*, and, after B.C. 446, of the decrees of the senate. They also possessed inferior judicial powers, extending to the imposition of fines.

In B.C. 452 ten commissioners (*decemviri*) were appointed for one year with sole and supreme power to compile a complete code of laws. Next year (B.C. 451) these decemvirs took office, all other magistracies being suspended. All the ten were patricians, the plebeians, according to Mommsen and Ihne, having been tricked out of representation on the board. Each commissioner administered the government in turn for a single day. They drew up a body of laws, which was approved by the senate and the *comitia centuriata*, and was straightway set forth in public on ten tables of bronze.

The decemviral form of government was continued for another year. The plebeians secured representation on the new board, which prepared additional laws. These were rejected by the patrician senate and *comitia centuriata*.

In B.C. 449 the decemvirate passed out of power, and the dual system of consulship and tribuneship was reëstablished. The new consuls, Valerius and Horatius, immediately drew up two tables of laws—no doubt the additional laws of the decemvirs, more or less modified—which were duly passed and published.

The ten sections of the decemviral laws, and the two sections of the consular (Valerian-Horatian) laws constitute the

famous Laws of the Twelve Tables. They are the foundation of the whole Roman Law. Except in a few points, general principles alone are set forth. The style is most rugged and concise, direct and sternly imperative.

Says Stephen in his History of the Criminal Law of England: "The excessive curtness of these provisions implies the existence of an all but unlimited discretion in those who had to administer the law. We know indeed, from other sources, that in ancient Rome the courts and magistrates practically made their own laws to a great extent. The laws of the Twelve Tables were of less importance in the history of the development of Roman law than the institutions by which they were carried into execution."

The following is the substance of the Tables:

## THE TWELVE TABLES

### TABLE I. *Proceedings Preliminary to Trial.*

1. If the complainant summon the defendant before the magistrate, he shall go; if he do not go, the plaintiff may call a bystander to witness, and take him by force.

2. If the defendant attempt evasion or flight, the complainant may lay hands upon him.

3. If the defendant be prevented by sickness or old age, the complainant shall provide a conveyance; but he need not provide a covered carriage, unless he choose.

4. A freeholder (or taxpayer, or man whose fortune is valued at not less than 1500 ases) shall find a freeholder (or taxpayer) as *vindex* or surety (for his appearance at trial); a proletary (or man of less fortune) shall find such surety as he can.

5. Where the parties agree (as to preliminaries), the plaintiff shall open his case at once. [Otherwise: Where the parties come to terms, let the matter be settled.]

6. If the parties do not agree, the plaintiff shall state his case in the comitium or in the forum before midday. Let both parties appear, and argue out the matter together.

7. If one of the parties has not appeared by midday, the

magistrate shall then give judgment in favour of the party that has appeared.

8. If both have appeared, at sunset the court shall rise.

9. Both parties shall enter into recognisances for their re-appearance (*vades, subvades*).

#### TABLE II. *The Trial.*

1. The amount of the stake to be deposited by each litigant shall be either 500 ases or 50 ases; 500 when the subject of dispute is valued at 1000 or upwards, 50 when at less than 1000. But when the subject of dispute is the freedom of a man, then, however valuable the man may be, the deposit shall be only 50 ases.

2. A dangerous illness, or a day appointed for the hearing in which an alien is a party. . . . If any of these circumstances occur to a *judex* or to an *arbiter*, or to a party, the cause shall be . . .

3. A party that is in want of a witness, shall go and cry aloud at the door of his house, thus summoning him to attend on the third market day following.

4. Theft may be the subject of compromise.

#### TABLE III. *Execution.*

1. In the case of an admitted debt or of awards made by judgment, 30 days shall be allowed for payment.

2. In default of payment, after these 30 days of grace have elapsed, the debtor may be arrested [or proceeded against by the action of *manus injectio*], and brought before the magistrate.

3. Unless the debtor discharge the debt, or someone come forward in court to guarantee payment, the creditor may take the debtor away with him, and bind him with thongs or with fetters, the weight of which shall not be more (but, if the creditor choose, may be less) than 15 pounds.

4. The debtor may, if he choose, live on his own means. Otherwise the creditor that has him in bonds shall give him a pound of bread a day, or, if he choose, more.

5. In default of settlement of the claim, the debtor may be kept in bonds for 60 days. In the course of this period he

shall be brought before the prætor in the *comitium* on three successive market days, and the amount of the debt shall be publicly declared. After the third market day the debtor may be punished with death or sold beyond the Tiber.

6. After the third market day the creditors may cut their several portions of his body; and anyone that cuts more or less than his just share shall be guiltless.

#### TABLE IV. *Patria Potestas.*

1. Monstrous or deformed offspring may be put to death.<sup>1</sup>

2. The father shall, during his whole life, have absolute power over his legitimate children. He may imprison the son, scourge him, or keep him working in the fields in fetters, or put him to death, even if the son held the highest offices of state, and were celebrated for his public services. He may also sell the son.

3. But if the father sell the son a third time, the son shall be free from his father.

4. A child born within ten months of the death of the mother's husband shall be held legitimate.

#### TABLE V. *Inheritance and Tutelage.*

1. All women shall be under the authority of a guardian; but the vestal virgins are free from tutelage.

2. The mancipable things belonging to a woman that is under the tutelage of her agnates are not subject to usucapion, unless she herself deliver possession of them with the authority of her tutor.

3. The provisions of the will of a paterfamilias concerning his property and the tutelage of his family, shall be law.

4. If the paterfamilias die intestate and without *suus heres*, his nearest agnate shall succeed.

5. Failing an agnate, the *gentiles* shall succeed.

6. In default of a testamentary tutor, the male agnates shall be tutors by operation of law.

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<sup>1</sup> Dion., 2, 15, says the law of Romulus required that such offspring should first be shown to five neighbours, and that these should approve of the course proposed.

7. If a man cannot control his actions, or is prodigal, his person and his property shall be under the power of his agnates, and, in default of these, of his gentiles . . . if he has no curator.

8. If a freedman die intestate, and without *suus heres*, his patron shall succeed.

9. Debts due to or by a deceased person are divided among his co-successors, by mere operation of law, in proportion to their shares in the inheritance.

10. The rest of the succession is divided among the co-successors by the action *familiæ erciscundæ*.

11. A slave freed by will, upon condition of giving a certain sum to the heir, may, in the event of being alienated by the heir, obtain his freedom by payment of this sum to the alienee.

#### TABLE VI. *Ownership and Possession.*

1. The legal effect of every contract, and of every conveyance (made with the money and the scales) shall rest upon the declarations made in the transaction.

2. Anyone that refuses to stand by such declarations shall pay a penalty of double damages.

3. A prescriptive title is acquired after two years' possession in the case of realty; after one year's possession in the case of other property.

4. If a wife (not married by *confarreatio* or *coemptio*) wishes to avoid subjection to the hand of her husband by usucapion, she shall absent herself for a space of three nights in each year from his house, and thus break the *usus* of each year.

5. No length of possession by an alien can vest in him a title to property as against a Roman citizen.

6. In the case where parties plead by joining their hands on the disputed property, in the presence of the magistrate [the actual possessor shall retain provisional possession; but, when it is a question of personal freedom], the magistrate shall award provisional possession in favour of liberty (that is, in favour of the party that asserts the man's freedom).

7. If a man finds that his timber has been used by another



in building a house, or for the support of vines, he shall not remove it.

8. But he shall have a right of action against the other for double its value.

9. Between the first pruning and the vintage [the owner may not recover the timber by vindictio?]. [*Otherwise*: And when they become separated, then they may be claimed by the owner.]

10. Things sold and delivered shall not become the property of the vendee until he has paid or otherwise satisfied the vendor.

11. Conveyance by bronze and scales (*mancipatio*), and surrender in court (*in jure cessio*) are confirmed.

#### TABLE VII. *Real Property Law.*

1. A clear space of two feet and a half shall be left around every house. [That is to say, every two houses must stand at least five feet apart.]

2. Boundaries shall be regulated (according to the commentary of Gaius) by the provisions of Solon's Athenian code: [if a man plants a fence between his own land and his neighbour's, he shall not go beyond the boundary line; if he builds a wall, he must leave a foot of space; if a house, two feet; if he digs a ditch or a trench, he must leave a space equal in breadth to the depth of the ditch or trench; if a well, six feet; and olives and fig-trees may not be placed within nine feet of a neighbour's land, nor other trees within five feet].

3. Conditions relating to villas, farms, and country cottages.

4. A space of five feet between adjoining lands shall not be liable to usucapion.

5. For the settlement of disputes as to boundaries, three arbiters shall be appointed.

6. The breadth of road over which there is right of way is eight feet in the straight, and sixteen feet at the bends.

7. The neighbouring proprietors shall make the road passable; but if it be impassable, one may drive one's beast or vehicle across the land wherever one chooses.

8. If one's property is threatened with damage from rain-

water that has been artificially diverted from its natural channels, the owner may bring an action *aquæ pluvie arcendæ*, and exact compensation for any damage his property may sustain.

9. The branches of trees that overshadow adjoining land shall be lopped to a height of fifteen feet from the ground.

10. Fruit that falls from one's trees upon a neighbour's land may be collected by the owner of the tree.

#### TABLE VIII. *Torts.*

1. Whoever shall publish a libel—that is to say, shall write verses imputing crime or immorality to anyone—shall be beaten to death with clubs.

2. If a man break another's limb, and do not compromise the injury, he shall be liable to retaliation.

3. For breaking a bone of a freeman, the penalty shall be 300 ases; of a slave, 150 ases.

4. For personal injury or affront, 25 ases.

5. [Accidental] damage must be compensated. [On the whole of this subject see Sell, *Die Actio de rupitiis sarciendis der XII. Tafeln*. This provision was followed up by the *Lex Aquilia*.]

6. A quadruped that has done damage on a neighbour's land, shall be given up to the aggrieved party, unless the owner of it make compensation.

7. He that pastures his animals on a neighbour's land is liable to an action.

8. A man shall not remove his neighbour's crops to another field by incantations, nor conjure away his corn.

9. For a person of the age of puberty to depasture or cut down a neighbour's crop by stealth in the night, shall be a capital crime, the culprit to be devoted to Ceres and hanged; but if the culprit be under the age of puberty, he shall be scourged at the discretion of the magistrate, and be condemned to pay double the value of the damage done.

10. If a man wilfully set fire to a house, or to a stack of corn set up near a house, he shall be bound, scourged, and burned alive; if the fire rose through accident, that is, through negligence, he shall make compensation, and, if too poor, he shall undergo a moderate punishment.

11. If a man wrongfully fell his neighbour's trees, he shall pay a penalty of 25 ases in respect of each tree.

12. A person committing theft in the night may lawfully be killed.

13. But in the day-time a thief may not be killed, unless he defend himself with a weapon.

14. If theft be committed in the day-time, and if the thief be taken in the fact, and do not defend himself with a weapon, then, if a freeman, he shall be scourged and adjudged as a bondsman to the person robbed; if a slave, he shall be scourged and hurled from the Tarpeian rock. A boy under puberty shall be scourged at the discretion of the prætor, and made to compensate for the theft.

15. A person that searches for stolen property on the premises of another, without the latter's consent, shall search naked, wearing nothing but a girdle, and holding a plate in his hands; and if any stolen property is thus discovered, the person in possession of it shall be held as a thief taken in the fact. When stolen property is searched for by consent in the presence of witnesses (without the girdle and plate), and found in a person's possession, the owner can recover by action of *furti concepti* against the person on whose premises it is found, and the latter can recover by action *furti oblati* against the person who brought it on his premises, three times the value of the thing stolen.

16. For theft not discovered in commission, the penalty is double the value of the property stolen.

17. Title to property in stolen goods cannot be acquired by prescription.

18. A usurer exacting higher interest than the legal rate of ten per cent. per annum is liable to fourfold damages.

19. A fraudulent bailee shall pay double the value of the deposit.

20. Any citizen may bring an action for the removal of a tutor suspected of maladministration, and the penalty shall be double the value of the property stolen.

21. A patron that wrongs his client shall be devoted to the infernal gods.

22. If anyone that has consented to be a witness, or has acted as scale-bearer (in mancipation), refuses to give his evidence, he shall be infamous and incapable of giving evidence, or of having evidence given on his behalf.

23. False witnesses shall be hurled from the Tarpeian rock.

24. If one kill another accidentally, he shall atone for the deed by providing a ram to be sacrificed in place of him.<sup>1</sup>

25. For practicing incantations or administering poisonous drugs [the penalty shall be death].

26. Seditious gatherings in the city during the night are forbidden.

27. Associations (or clubs) may adopt whatever rules they please, provided such rules be not inconsistent with public law.

#### TABLE IX. *Public Law.*

1. No laws shall be proposed affecting individuals only.

2. The assembly of the centuries alone may pass laws affecting the *caput* of a citizen.

3. A *judex* or arbiter, appointed by the magistrate to decide a case, if guilty of accepting a bribe, shall be punished with death.

4. Provisions relating to the quæstors (or court appointed for the investigation of cases) of homicide.—There shall be a right of appeal from every decision of a *judex* (*judicium*), and from every penal sentence (*pœna*).

5. Whoever stirs up an enemy against the state, or betrays a citizen to an enemy, shall be punished capitally.

6. No one shall be put to death, except after formal trial and sentence.

#### TABLE X. *Sacred Law.*

1. A dead body shall not be buried or burnt within the city.

2. More than this shall not be done. The wood of the funeral pile shall not be smoothed with the axe.

<sup>1</sup> "To depasture one's crops by stealth was a capital crime by the Twelve Tables—a more severe punishment than was inflicted in case of homicide." Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, 18, 3, 12. Compare Table VIII, 9.

3. Not more than three mourners wearing *ricinia*,<sup>1</sup> one wearing a small tunic of purple, and ten flute-players may attend the funeral.

4. Women shall not tear their cheeks, nor indulge in wailing.

5. The bones of a dead person shall not be preserved for later burial, unless he died in battle or in a foreign country.

6. Regulations regarding [prohibiting?] unction, drinking (banquets), expensive libations (of wine perfumed with myrrh), chaplets, and incense boxes.

7. But if the deceased has gained a chaplet, by the achievements either of himself or of his slaves or his horses, he or his parents may legitimately wear such, in virtue of his honour and valour [while the corpse is lying within the house or is being borne to the sepulchre].

8. No person shall have more than one funeral, or more than one bier.

9. Gold shall not be burned or buried with the dead, except such gold as the teeth have been fastened with.

10. A funeral pile or sepulchre for burning the corpse shall not be erected within sixty feet of another man's house, except with his consent.

11. Neither a sepulchre for burning nor its vestibule can be acquired by usucapion.

#### TABLE XI. *Supplementary.*

1. Patricians shall not intermarry with plebeians.

#### TABLE XII. *Supplementary.*

1. An action of distress shall lie, on default of payment, against the purchaser of a victim, and also against the hirer of a beast of burden that has been lent for the purpose of raising money to spend on a sacrifice.

2. If a slave commit a theft, or do any other injury, the master may, as an alternative to paying the damages assessed, surrender the delinquent.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ricinium*, a small square sheet of woolen cloth, doubled and wrapped over the head and shoulders; a mourning dress assumed more especially by females.



3. If anyone wrongfully obtain possession of a thing that is the subject of litigation, the magistrate shall appoint three arbiters to decide the ownership; and, on their adverse action, the fraudulent possessor shall pay as compensation double the value of the temporary possession of the thing in question.

4. A thing whose ownership is the subject of litigation shall not be consecrated to religious purposes, under a penalty of double its value.

5. The most recent law repeals all previous laws that are inconsistent with it.









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PROPERTY OF THE  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Theft or mutilation  
is punishable by law

P.L. 117





